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The Transfiguration of Christ

BY
FRANK WAKELEY GUNSAULUS

Our notions of what is natural will be enlarged in proportion to our greater knowledge of the works of God and the dispensation of His providence.
BUTLER, Analogy.

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To my friends aforetime who were members of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and to friends who latterly were members of the University of Chicago, all of whom studied with me, in these lectures, "The Transfiguration of Christ," I dedicate this revised edition of a volume which owes much to their interest and thought.

F. W. G.

Central Church, Chicago.
January 1st, 1907.

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LECTURE I.

The Nature and Method of Christian Thinking.

"Οὐ γὰρ σεσοφισμένοις μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες ἐγνωρίσαμεν ὑμῖν τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἐπόπται γενηθέντες τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλειότητος. Λαβὼν γὰρ παρὰ Θεοῦ πατρὸς τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν, φωνῆς ἐνεχθείσης αὐτῷ τοιᾶσδε ὑπὸ τῆς μεγαλοπρεποῦς δόξης· Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, εἰς ὃν ἐγὼ εὐδόκησα. Καὶ ταύτην τὴν φωνὴν ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐνεχθεῖσαν, σὺν αὐτῷ ὄντες ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ ἁγίῳ."

ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΠΕΤΡΟΥ. Β'. i. 16, 17, 18.

"If the miracles, if revelation itself cannot stand upon the superhuman character of Jesus, then let it fall. If that character does not contain all truth in itself, then let there be no truth. If there is anything worthy of belief not found in this, we may well consent to live and die without it. Before this sovereign light, streaming out from God, the deep questions and dark surmisings and doubts unresolved, which make the night so gloomy and terrible about us, hurry away to their native abyss. God, who commanded the light to shine in darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. This it is that has conquered the assaults of doubt and false learning in all past ages, and will in all ages to come. No argument against the sun will drive it from the sky. No mole-eyed scepticism, dazzled by its brightness, can turn away the shining it refuses to look upon. And they who long after God will be ever turning their eyes thitherward, and either with reason or without reason, or, if need be, against manifold impediments of reason, will see and believe." — Horace Bushnell.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST.

LECTURE I.

The Nature and Method of Christian Thinking.

"And when He was come into the house, the blind men came unto Him, and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto Him, Yea, LORD." — MATTHEW ix. 28.

"Nature is the parable of grace. The worlds of mind and matter interpenetrate each other. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. In all the process of grace, He is first, not we. We find Him, because He first finds us. We confirm our faith by means of reason, indeed, but that faith is itself the fruit of Divine contact with the soul. We must learn that it is not by arguments without, but by the breath of God within, that we get our first impressions of the Divine existence." — FRANCIS L. PATTON, *The Genesis of the Idea of God*.

I HAVE chosen to study with you this event in the life of the man and the men of our Lord's immediate ministry, in order that, before entering into the light of Christ's transfiguration, we may gain for ourselves the

true point of view of all Christian thinking, and become sympathetic with the conditions and methods of Christian discovery. Here Jesus made clear the relation between an acceptance of *Himself* in the spirit of a man and the new vision which the powers of thought shall thereby obtain, in which any event of the mutual life of Christ and a man may be rightly understood. Perhaps never more deliberately did He stop to show that He Himself in the human spirit must be the source of any or all intellectual conditions whereby His dealings with it may be comprehended.

These blind men had been following Him with their want, crying: "*Thou Son of David, have mercy upon us.*"[1] It is evident from their cry that some of the conditions of blessing were already theirs. Always the thoughts with which the mind comes to a fact or truth, limit, or enlarge, and, indeed, otherwise modify the real possession

[1] Verse 27.

we have when any fact or truth is apprehended through thinking. So their ideas, coming from tradition or arising out of their conscious need, were at once the avenues along which their blessing must come and the gates which should admit it fully by their breadth or contract it by their narrowness. They had conceived of Him as "*the Son of David.*" That conception was an open door into their spirits; and yet, when compared with a complete conception of Jesus, we see that it was too narrow to let the whole and even the essential Christ into their conscious life. It prepared them by its opening expectancy, but its slight breadth imposed a mental limitation. They asked only for "mercy"—"*Have mercy upon us.*" And this significant cry, arising from conscious need, was modified in its very birth by their apprehension of Christ; yet it was the only opening through which His merciful gift might pass. Thus did the measure of their faith determine at once the

measure of the blessing He might bestow. It could be no more, for their conscious life had not opened unto more; it could be no less, because of the abundant mercifulness to which they had appealed. So when the blessing was given, He indicated not any arbitrary limit which He put upon it, but rather the necessary limit which their spiritual hospitality, as seen in their faith, made for it. "*According to your faith*," He said, "*be it unto you*."[1]

It is pleasant to think that God's blessings are not thus conditioned and modified by our faith; that the greatness of His gift does somehow get in, in spite of our littleness; and, working in us unconsciously, that it does at last reveal itself to our conscious life. And the truth in such a thought is this, namely, that the very least of an apprehended blessing leads us to the larger stores of grace; and so swift is the movement of the newly touched mind,

[1] Verse 29.

from the new want which the fresh blessing discloses, to a renewed appeal, that we do not recognize how we are constantly approaching God, again and again, by new stages of developed faith which are ours after each answer He gives.

The comparative narrowness of the faith of these blind men has another evidence. After they had seen Him, through their newly opened eyes, and He had said: "*See that no man know it*," "*they spread abroad His fame in all that country*."[1] As in many similar cases, He would have made such an addition to their interior life, through His touch upon their exterior life, that the visible achievement would have been lost in their newly developed and invisible manhood. That, however, would have been a greater blessing than they could have received through a spiritual vision limited by their conceiving of Christ simply as the "*Son of David*." No; they

[1] Verse 30.

could not admit that greater illumination. The idea which they had of Jesus Christ had defined itself when they cried, "*Son of David*," and the conception which they had of their own need discovered itself in the prayer: "*Have mercy.*" This was their mental attitude. It was too narrow a gateway for the complete gift which the Christ brought with Him, yet it was sufficiently broad to admit enough of His influence to create in them a new mental condition, which would make the incoming of more inevitable. The view of Him, expressed in that cry, had filled them with such a vision of Him and of His visible kingdom, with its immediate and manifest triumph, that they discerned the stately movings of the Messiah in His growing fame.

Profoundly did Christ then recognize the fact, of which they were all too unconscious, that there must be in the totality of each character which we call the spirit of the man, a deeper acceptance of Himself.

This presence of Himself in their spiritual life must be the prerequisite to any intelligent taking in of anything He might do for them. "*Believe ye that I am able to do this?*" He said. In the narrow opening of mind which was disclosed by their cry, He, as something more than the "*Son of David*," saw an opportunity of entrance. He proposed to widen the gate as He entered, by asking for a more hospitable faith. Then, as though He would fasten that gate of apprehension open against the wall of their consciousness, He held their thought and made them look from out the very depths of their spirits, and say: "*Yea, Lord.*" When they accepted Him as "*Lord*," their mental apprehension had widened from the narrowness of the cry, "*Thou, Son of David.*" Then it was that He entered as sight to their blindness. So, He was accepted personally, before He came into them as miracle and blessing. He Himself had touched the centres of

their spiritual life, and He thus widened from within, through the mind without, a path for the miracle. All that this blessing and wonder were to their intellectual life was made possible and even natural by His presence in their spiritual life. Accepting Him at the very centres of their being, they could accept the miraculous blessing in the outlying realm of thought. Limited was their acceptance; limited was the blessing. The hands which were held out were filled with all they could hold. But back of the holding out of any hands which might carry anything away, was the Christ of an interior experience, who inspired their larger faith. A greater miracle within—the accepted Christ—had prepared them for the lesser one without. After His entrance into them, the supernatural was natural to their minds, to the extent of their conscious reception of the natural lordship of Jesus Christ over their spirits.

Here are disclosed the nature and method

of Christian thinking. They flow out of the nature of the Christian life—the hiding of the soul, *i. e.*, the life with Christ in God [1] —the mastery by the Christ of the human spirit, inclusive, as the spirit is, of the concerns and destiny of intellect, sensibilities and will.

Christianity means a revelation of the Divine in the human—first in Jesus Christ; then in other men. The religions before Christ were efforts from earth towards heaven; the religion of Christ is the effort of heaven towards the earth. In the highest pre-Christian religion, the sacrifice was offered by men for the reconciliation of God; in Christianity, the sacrifice is made by God for the reconciliation of man. In the one, it was to change the feelings of heaven that the altars flamed with fire and were red with blood: in the other, it was to transform the feelings of earth that the altar-steps of Calvary bore the crucifix. A related difference

[1] Colossians iii. 3.

is seen, at that moment when the empire of the old passed into the republic of the new humanity. Froude says, concerning Julius Cæsar:[1] "Strange and startling resemblance between the fate of the founder of the kingdom of this world and of the founder of the kingdom not of this world, for which the first was a preparation. Each was denounced for making himself a king. Each was maligned as the friend of publicans and sinners: each was betrayed by those whom he had loved and cared for: each was put to death: and Cæsar also was believed to have risen again and ascended into heaven and become a divine being." This, however, does not do justice to the first proposition of the Christian system. To our eyes, the position of Cæsar in the mind of Rome was the last achievement of the decaying spirit. It was the exalting of a man from earth, by colossal effort, into the stature of a god. To our eyes, also,

[1] Cæsar, a Sketch, closing words.

the place of Jesus in the consciousness of humanity was the first fact vouchsafed to note the inspiration of the receptive spirit. It was the approach of the living God, to effortless and waiting souls, in the form and substance of a man. As the evening of Paganism left the race with the apotheosis of a Cæsar, the morning of Christianity broke with the incarnation of God in the Christ. The evening darkened into midnight, with man crying up to God: that midnight retreated before the morning, with God speaking to and in humanity.

It is indisputable, in the presence of this vital difference, that much of our thinking on Christian topics inside the church is pagan. We begin on earth to build our steps of apprehension to the realm of God. We make our intellectual fundamental to our spiritual life, and expect great discoveries unto the spirit from a keen and alert reason. We have not taken the living Christ as the primal and initiative

fact in personal as well as historic Christianity ; but, with characteristic rationalism, we have begun with an incidental miracle to explain the essential miracle—the babe in the manger, or the victim on the cross. Our religious thinking has oftentimes been even less prophetic than the Psalmist's. We have tried to see God in the light of nature, while he said: "*In Thy light shall we see light.*"[1] We have sought to explain Christ in the light of events, related or isolated, while He was saying to our twilight: "*I am the light of the world.*" Our thinking has thus, and too often, reversed the divine order; and, without a word which would prepare the mind for its new light, we have attempted to produce illumination upon its blindness, asking its bewildered vision then to recognize, in it all, a supernatural Christ.

Jesus Christ does not manifest His essential Godhead more plainly than in the spiritual faith He demands as fundamental to any

[1] Psalm xxxvi. 9.

intellectual apprehension of Him. In a sense, perhaps not wholly understood by himself, did one of the earlier theologians declare: "*God is the way to Himself.*" The Christ maintains, in His influence on the soul of man, this divine characteristic. In it all, He does not destroy the native logic of human nature. His entrance into the human spirit restores it. Faith is a spiritual apprehension which comes by a united act of the intellect, the feelings and the will. In the act of faith, man is simply his integral self. The truth which faith sees has the evidence of the other domains of the spirit of man, in its appeal to any one. Through its wide hospitality, God and His Christ enter the whole nature. The intellect has a new premise, from the entire spirit's experience. It can see God through thought, because into all the texture of thinking God has entered, as a fact lying back in the consciousness of the whole spiritual nature. It can now see light,

because light is in its eye; and even the abstract truth, which escaped it so long, is apprehended by a sight divine.

Jesus does not offer to the intellect the supernatural in the abstract. He comes as its incarnation, offering Himself to the spirit, whose eye is faith, that He may assume His natural lordship over a man's entire conscious life. No act of intellect can admit Him. He asks to be taken by faith, which involves the activity of the whole soul. He influences and acts from the centre, where intellect, feeling, and will are articulated and concurrent in the one supreme act of faith. Once at the centre of man's conscious life, He will be borne outward to the entire circumference of its intellectual, emotional, and volitional activity, and be everywhere its Lord. Concrete in Him, the supernatural is taken into the new combinations of man's conscious life, the moment he accepts in the faith of his undivided spirit the lordship of Jesus

Christ. Then begins his Christian experience, which the intellect shares with the feelings and the will. Until then, there has been a persistent fragmentariness of his nature in being and action. In this initial act of accepting Christ, man is consciously one. He begins to think, as a son of God. The new logic of his new life pervades the operations of his mind. In this experience, so interfused are the realms of spiritual life, that he may "*love God with all his mind.*"[1] Having an interior experience with the supernatural, he has an eye for it, as he never had before. In the growing consciousness which is his, of the supernaturalness of Jesus Christ, he feels his own. It is the moment when his true life begins to realize itself. In the central depth of Christ's supernaturalness, his own is quickened into life and becomes conscious. "*I am the vine,*" said his lord, "*ye are the branches.*"[2] In the life of Christ, ours must

[1] Matthew xxii. 37. [2] John xv. 5.

begin: and with its vitality ours must thrill, driving, as it grows, more deeply into His, and repeating the rhythm of the life divine, as its juices circulate in our veins. Being thus vitally attached to the life of Christ, we repeat His life intellectual, emotional, volitional; and hence, so far as the privilege and duty of Christian living go, they are one; and, in thought, as well as action, we have their union as we obey the injunction: "*Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.*" [1]

These words of Paul are evidence of his intelligent grasp of the philosophy of Christian faith and life. Here, he had in mind an ethical problem. Man's struggle with visible expediency was in his thought. "*The mind of Christ*" had the significance of a condition in which Christ "*made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself*

[1] Philippians ii. 5, 6, 7. See Bishop Brooks's sermon on this text.

the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," and "*became obedient unto death.*" Just as then that problem of ethics was solved, so now must our problems of thought gain their solution. This "*mind of Christ*" is to be the salvation of the human intellect. No more truly does the acceptance of Christ in the spirit bring with it the consciousness of one's new attitude to the universe as a *will* than the consciousness also of a new attitude unto it as an *intellect.* The consciousness of one's own supernaturalness through the revelation of Christ, in the face of that arrogant and tyrannous naturalism which sin has developed, asserts itself in a new method of self-determining life, after the *will* of Christ: that same consciousness asserts itself in a new view of the universe, in which there lies a unique mental method that makes the supernatural natural, at least to the process and realization of the new intellectual life. The intellect is "*born*

again," [1] and "*born of the spirit*." [2] In its old life, it had touched this finite thing and that, with no reference to the infinite. Now it sees through and by means of the infinite, and, in its atmosphere, looks upon the finite. What has happened to the man? The fact is that, intellectually, he is *converted*. He is "born from above" and "of God." [3] It is not a wondrous development of the old life, however well it has succeeded in adding together many finite things that it might reach the infinite; but it is a totally new life, wherein it begins with the infinite as the fact of which it is the most sure. It is the soul's *real* life.[4] It is a life in God, for He begins, in creation and providence, with the infinite—Himself. It discloses itself with the same experience, in the affections and will. Coming into the spirit by

[1] John iii. 4. [2] John iii. 5.

[3] 1 John iii. 9.

[4] Martineau, "Hours of Thought with Sacred Things.' Sermon on "The Finite and Infinite in Human Nature."

faith, instead of coming to one of its realms, the intellect, by reason, Jesus Christ at once enters the whole region of the interior life, and acts at that central point where the realms of the spirit are one through the act of faith. It is not the old life of the will, continually adding to its finite efforts that it may reach the infinite. Its true life begins in the infinite, not by achieving it, but by yielding unto it, that it may be strong. And so with the affections. It is not a life developed into completeness out of the incompleteness of the old. The new life begins where the old sought to end—with the infinite Love. Thus Jesus addresses the paganism of our time, which tries to build its ladder to the skies, hoping that it will some day and somehow so understand nature as to find its Reason for the human intellect, or that some time it may obtain a satisfying cosmic emotion for the affections, or that by and by it will control the restless powers of the

universe by its will. He says, as of old, "*Ye must be born again.*"

The true method of Christian thinking then, flows out of the nature of the "*new birth,*" which is the characteristic event in the related life of Christ and the human spirit. As did the blind men, so must the spiritual nature get from the supernatural Christ, whom it truly calls "Lord," a quite natural mental preparation for and an outlook upon the supernatural, a preparation of that sort which not only saves it from the confusion of ignorance, but gives it the peace of intelligent power. There is no other peace for so sublime a being as man. We may see the point of view which the mind obtains, as we note one characteristic trait of Christ and of His truest disciples. That trait is their *consciousness of infinity.* The acceptance of the personal Christ gives the mind this atmosphere. Just as with the supernatural Christ, in the spirit's experience, the mind has a sense of

the supernatural, so with the infinite Christ, at the centre of character, there takes possession of the entire being a consciousness of infinity as natural as it is pervasive. "Infinity" is abstract to aridity without Him: it is concrete to impressive reality in Jesus Christ. With this consciousness, allied with and oftentimes not to be distinguished from the sense of the supernatural thus gained in Christ, a believer comes to what are termed "miracles"; and, looking upon them from a divine point of view, they are seen to come naturally into the order of the universe. A world without miracles becomes far less credible than a world with them. It is only necessary to get the point of view and the mental method furnished to these blind men in Christ's accepted lordship over their souls, and then miracles may appear as natural in the order of our thought as they were in the order of their occurrence. Jean Paul says: "What are miracles on earth are nature

in heaven." If, then, one accepts his "*heavenly place*" of spiritual experience and of consequent mental life "*in Christ Jesus*"[1] as his point of view, he must look upon the Transfiguration of Christ as the natural manifestation of His infinite power and glory.

Whenever we approach such an event, we see how necessary even yet, it is for Him to say to His disciples: "*Marvel not at this.*" He continually aimed at decreasing their unintelligent astonishment at these normal manifestations of His life, saying, "*Marvel not at this*," or by asking silence concerning it. He was seeking to get them to realize the fact that, having accepted Him, there was nothing for them to wonder at, and that, though without Him, they must be a constant source of intellectual confusion; with Him in their spiritual life, they were matters of course. He was showing them the naturalness of miracles eventuating, as

[1] Ephesians i. 3, 20; ii. 6.

they did, out of that greatest of miracles, Himself. Lord of their whole life, He was Lord of their thought and in it; so that from this accepted lordship they ought to expect, as they had indeed accepted, a lordship over nature which should make wonders cease. With their sense of the supernatural feeding upon Him,—with the infinite, which was He, in the mind's eye, they should have no thoughtless surprise at the appearance of the supernatural anywhere.[1]

We need have no fear, as Jesus Himself had none, that in this view the evidential value of the miracles, to which the Transfiguration is related, shall be lost. It is not necessary to repeat considerations which have been stated with great force in our day and which show that their evidential value, though urged in a way quite different from that of former times, has, never-

[1] Steinmeyer, *The Miracles of our Lord.* Introduction. Venn, *On some of the Characteristics of Belief,* p. 187.

theless, a mighty and even irresistible effect,—an effect withal precisely such as Jesus Himself desired that it should have over the men of His own age. "*Blessed*" still are they "*who, not having seen, have nevertheless believed.*"[1] He addresses Himself to the whole spirit through faith, not to the intellect alone through its processes of logic. Once in the soul, He comes to the intellect with a native lordship. He, as the supernatural itself within the atmosphere of man's life, makes the supernatural credible. Hume's phrase, "the contrariety of miracles to experience," falls to the ground. The intellect has necessarily participated in the experience of the whole spiritual nature, and in that experience, one's thinking has had to do with the greatest of miracles—the miracle of the Christ. After Jesus Christ has sent the thrill of His supernatural life from the centre to the circumference of a man's spirit, any words about miracles being

[1] John xx. 29; 2 Corinthians v. 7.

"interruptions of the course of nature" seem to clearly indicate an inadequate conception of nature and positive ignorance of that dominant personal nature within. Indeed, the consciousness of infinity, which the whole spiritual nature gets in Christ, so prepares the intellect for the natural outworking of His essential life, that, when miracles come from His hand, the mind feels that it has not failed to understand Him, and has the evidence which comes of seeing what it expected to see.[1]

"Peace settles where the intellect is meek;
The faith heaven strengthens when He moulds the Creed."[2]

[1] "Miracles and the proof of miracles from testimony cannot be spared. When the peculiarities which distinguish Christianity from all other religions have impressed our minds, when the character of Christ in its unique and supernal quality has risen before us in its full attractive power, and when, from these influences, we are almost persuaded, at least not a little inclined, to believe in the gospel as a revelation of God, we crave some attestation of an objective character; we naturally expect that if all this be on a plane above nature, there will be some explicit sign and attestation of the fact.—*Prof. George P. Fisher.*

[2] Wordsworth.

It is not meant, in this lecture, to assume that the entire preparation of the human spirit for Christian discovery has to do with the intellect alone, and that such an event as the Transfiguration of Christ has its entire lesson to impart to the faculties of thought. Christian thinking itself is spiritual. Everything Christian restores and preserves the integrity of the spiritual being of man. This *consciousness of infinity* which Christ brings with Himself into the spirit is the common medium through which intellect, affections, and will have experience by and in *faith.* Christ comes to the whole nature in each of His manifestations of essential life. Faith is, psychologically, the act of the entire interior nature. It alone has the concurrent power of intellect, sensibilities and will. And when in their integrity, as a unit, they take the Christ, by the laws of the spiritual life, whatever He is or has will touch whatever the man is or has. This consciousness of

infinity will be dominant everywhere. The will loses its finiteness; and it so girds itself with His might that a St. Paul says, "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*"[1] It has not only obtained a consciousness of infinity in the abstract, but it has what was the source of its clear metaphysic,—a reality which in the realest way has developed its real self. The feelings lose their incapacity; the affections lose their finiteness. They so clothe themselves with His nature that the Infinite reveals Himself as Love, and the love of Love becomes the passion of the heart. They, also, have not only obtained a consciousness of infinity, but they have, what was the ground of this, a reality so real to them that they stir with forces which are boundless. The intellect, too, loses its finiteness. It so adopts *Himself as its point of view, and the medium through which He looks as its own,* that it becomes a reality to itself for the

[1] Philippians iv. 13.

first time. It is contemporary with the powers which moved in the chaos of the past and work yonder in the rich future. It is at home with the counsels of the Infinite One. They are its readiest postulates. In the light of the infinite, it sees light.[1] The "new heavens" of thought have come, and, underneath, the "new earth" of thought.[2] So far as the interpretation of any new event on earth is concerned, it must be gained from this point of view. Things are to be understood "from above." Like the "new Jerusalem" of man's civilization, the "new Jerusalem" of his philosophy of life "*cometh down from God, out of heaven.*"[3]

The study upon which we now enter proceeds upon the assumption, then, that Christ had been accepted by Peter, James, and John, and that in order to understand

[1] Psalm xxxvi. 9. [2] Revelation xxi. 1.

[3] Revelation xxi. 2.

the event, in even the small measure of which our present life makes us capable, there must be in us the preparation of mind which the presence of Christ in us brings. Beginning with this sense of the supernatural and consciousness of infinity, the glistening garment and the shining face are not as unnatural and incongruous as, without these, is the merest chemical change in the test tube to the student abreast with his science.[1] The mind finds a universe on its hands, when it takes up an atom. Says Tyndall: "The study of any part of nature completely would involve the study of the whole."[2] It is becoming painfully evident to a non-Christian philosophy that the finite cannot explain the infinite. Hands are reaching out for the infinities. Indeed, men are surer of the infinite than of the finite. The dust trembles with forces not

[1] *Modern Realism*, p. 46; *The Unseen Universe*, p. 98.

[2] *The Forms of Water*, p. 6.

its own.[1] It is beyond its finite horizon that the movement began with which matter is stirred. The "atom" is quite as much a fact of metaphysics as of physics. In the twilight of our time, a mind which has felt the intellectual lordship of Christ may stand unbewildered in the glory of a Transfiguration, because it sees a philosophy without the infinite dashed into pieces even by the soft-falling dew.

As a step in the unfolding of the infinite, we shall look at the Transfiguration of Christ. Here, as elsewhere, in Him and His life the finite and infinite meet; the natural and the supernatural coalesce. Be it ours to see life's problem where its conflicting forces are in luminous peace, that we may gain the experience which fuses them into that transfigured calm.

[1] Pieton, *Mystery of Matter*, First Essay; Clark-Maxwell, *Biography*, p. 169; *The Supernatural in Nature*, p. 65; Pierce, *Ideality in Science*, c. 3; Kekulé, Lehr buch der organischen Chemie, Lange, *Geschichte des-Materialismus*, ii. 190.

LECTURE II.

The Time of the Transfiguration.

"*Nihil sine ætate est.*" — TERTULLIAN.

LECTURE II.

The Time of the Transfiguration.

"And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings." — Luke ix. 28.

IN the unity of a great nature or movement lies a logic which makes the succession of events in its career a continuous development. Behind and within the latest is the significance of the earliest fact. Psychology now sees the whole man, in the most seemingly partial exercise of the soul. The personalty so reigns supreme and infuses itself through the division lines which any mechanical geography may have made of the realm of our interior life that every power is seen to be concerned in and to condition the action of every other. Theology, in the glow of a renascent life, finds that

God has not at one time acted as the supreme justice, and at another as the infinite mercy, but that at all times and everywhere He has been manifesting Himself. It is marvelous to thoughtful minds how we could have escaped the fact, that, when we say "*God is*," we have put aside all conceptions of an interrupted providence and a broken human history. It goes without saying that along with these have gone all dogmas which make the nature of God a collection of opposing attributes, or a battle-ground of inharmonious powers. The infinite is one. God is the absolute integer. In the light of this fact, the revelation of God in Holy Scripture, in human history, and in His self-manifestation in Jesus Christ, becomes a unit ; and as His revelation in the life of man accounts for the "solidarity" of the race, so the presence of Himself in Jesus of Nazareth gives Christ's career a unity all divine, — a unity which He declared as such when He said : "*My Father worketh hitherto, and*

I work."[1] In no clearer words could Paul have declared this phase of the *deity* of Christ than by saying, "*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*"[2]

All great poetry, however surely it has missed its inspirer, has noted what a Christian theist must term the unity of God in His revelation in history, as it has detected the life of every meaning of the past in the present. To its vision, the future is radiant only by a continuity of life which relates its eras in an unbroken eternity. Says George Eliot:—

"Presentment of better things on earth
Sweeps in with every force that stirs our souls
To admiration, self-renouncing love,
Or thoughts, like light, that bind the world in one;
Sweeps like the sense of vastness, when at night
We hear the roll and dash of waves that break
Nearer and nearer with the rushing tide,
Which rises to the level of the cliff
Because the wide Atlantic rolls behind,
Throbbing respondent to the far-off orbs."

Bayard Taylor's Prince Deukalion utters

[1] John v. 17. [2] Hebrews xiii. 8; Ephesians iv. 10.

it, in spite of something of the darkness which in Shelley or Byron became atheistic or revolutionary: —

"The past
Is man's possession, not his mocking glimpse
Through loopholes of the jail where Reason pines.
It gives the Prophet vision. . . .
. . . What common eye can see
Past things as present, ancient miracle
To-day's dull fact, God's hand upon the man
It looks at? Over gulfs of ages these
First find their sanctity, as our dark orb
Drinks light from ether till it grows a star."

Over against much revolutionary poetry, which, like that sort of philosophy, has involved atheism by suggesting the existence of a Godless moment, the evolutionary thought of all deep souls has presented a Unity, which, both intelligent and infinite in history, has inculcated a consistent theism. So much has been involved in this "*mere theism*" that the history of the universe must be read to understand its content.

This unity of life in God has its mani-

festation, as does God Himself, in the historic Christ. The Gospels alone do not furnish the whole record of His influence. He comes to our age, not only as a being like the Socrates of Plato, or even of Xenophon, borne to us in a biographical sketch, and effective simply by the power of the truths He taught, but also as having for nineteen centuries revealed Himself by His influence upon and along with the forces which make history. In all this, the deep unity of the divine nature is revealed. The Oriental conception of this unity is strikingly presented in these lines: —

> "Though God extends beyond creation's rim,
> Each smallest atom holds the whole of Him;"

and in these, also: —

> "Mirrors God maketh each atom in space,
> And fronteth each one with His perfect face."[1]

Just as God discloses His character and the meaning of His providence in each event in the history of the universe, so

[1] Alger, *The Poetry of the Orient.*

Jesus Christ, His self-manifestation, puts His entire being and mission in such an event as the transfiguration. But another vision of His unity appears also. Just as the unity of God's life is seen in the continuity of movement and the development of the process and the results of divine government, so the unity of the life of Christ is seen in that growth of revealed truth, which not only carries the mind of man to greater revelations at each step, but also carries him just so far and by such means as will make the revelation as continuous in the life of human souls as it is in Christ.

I have dwelt thus long upon this point, because it seems to me that in the unity of Christ's life, as set over against the disconnectedness and broken character of every human life, there is evidence of the very divinity which flashes forth in the event whose place in the career of Jesus seems such an indication of the perfect integrity of His nature. The unit of His life moved

like a constant factor through history. Its divine integrity made the fragmentary events of many generations a unity. So He seemed to Stephen, as related to other lives.[1] And when He is studied in relation to His own life, the conscious unity that binds one fact to another has no parallel in the universe, save in God, whose manifestation He is. The time of the transfiguration is the moment when the earth and skies demand it; and with an imperial consciousness of what His life is — a consciousness that never seems less spontaneous when it is most august — He unites the threads of His past teaching with those unseen as yet in the future, in the glory of transfiguration. It carries out the unity of God, as incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. The choice of that night is as truly illustrative of the divinity of Christ as is anything that He said. The transfiguration itself was the next fact which was to continue the revelation of God in Him. And

[1] Acts vii.

so, "*after six days*," or, as Luke is less definite, "*about an eight days after these sayings, He took them into a mountain apart.*"

"About an eight days after" what "sayings"? Sayings of whose meaning we may have a more just conception, if we go back a little in the stream and move along with the current of His teaching.

His Galilean ministry[1] had its characteristic features summed up in the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Behind any lesson of the personal kindness there exhibited, in the unostentatious manifestation of His power, lay a vision, for which His previous dealing with these disciples had prepared them, of the identity of the infinite and invisible in Jesus Christ. It was the moment when He would have them see how this sense of the supernatural in them gave them an apprehension of the infinite, and how near to them and in Him was the kingdom of the invisible. For that hour,

[1] Cf. Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, vol. i. p. 106

the king was enthroned in their very presence; and in His hands nature and the supernatural, the finite and infinite, were blended. At the touch of the invisible majesty in Him, the limitations of the visible were destroyed, and there seemed to be the presence in the finite of the infinite. When He blessed the visible supply, there went into it the reserve of the invisible in Him. This fact of the blessing of it has fixed the attention of the four evangelists, and in one the eucharistic idea is prominent.[1] Thus, in the least of the incidents of this event, does the presence of a king and kingdom of the invisible assert itself.[2] And it is not marvelous that this should be the fact. This Teacher had come to found a kingdom. In all the changes of form which His idea must undergo to make itself understood, this conception of regency is constant. It so impressed the time, that Peter's "*priest-*

[1] Godet, *St. Luke*, vol. i. p. 407.

[2] Trench on *The Miracles*, p. 96.

hood" of believers is "*royal*,"[1] and He who came to found it is seen by the seer of Patmos as "*king of kings*."[2] But it had many forms of statement. Its natural many-sidedness admitted of it. It is proclaimed by John the Baptist as the "*kingdom of heaven;*"[3] and this term is used by the lips of the Christ.[4] It is declared to be the "*kingdom of God*" in moments when it is being preached by its king and His subjects.[5] Wherever it is preached or proclaimed, it is a kingdom of which no man can say: "*Lo, here!*" or, "*Lo, there!*" "*for the kingdom of God is within you.*"[6] It "*cometh not with observation.*" It is the reign of the invisible in the visible, because it is the reign of God in Christ. To accept it is to throw one's whole self and destiny into the hands of the invisible kingship of Christ. In the acceptance of it, one be-

[1] 1 Peter ii. 9.
[2] Revelation xix. 16.
[3] Matthew iii. 2.
[4] Matthew vii. 11; xiii. 11.
[5] Luke ix. 27.
[6] Luke xvii. 20, 21.

comes a member of the royal family of the invisible God. The law of Christ is the law of his life, — a life invisible, hid with the invisible majesty of Christ, in the invisible God. With such a kingdom to found, and being such a king, the Galilean ministry could not be closed without some such manifestation. And the character of the miracle was inevitable from the intelligent unity of Christ's life. It was, as it needs must be, an event where the infinite in Him might touch the material nature, with which He had to do, in a way which should manifest the complete subservience of the visible to the invisible.[1] So in this miracle He manifested the invisible kingship hidden in His humiliation, and the secret of that kingdom, which in Him made the finite serve the infinite.

All this came out of the fact that He saw that whatever worth the invisible had for Him must soon be known. The visible world was beginning to shiver under his

[1] Weiss, *Life of Christ*, vol. ii. 385.

feet. John the Baptist had just been slain by order of Herod, and His own death became more evident. In the news from Herod's household, He saw Calvary. So out of this visible life of the multitude, He goes into a more solitary place with His own disciples, — the invisible and sad king of an invisible and as yet not understood kingdom. The unexpected crowd confronts Him. He will celebrate a feast. The visible crowd cannot take the invisible king from His throne, and it is then that He is not only an invisible king, but also the king of the invisible. The thousands are fed.[1]

There is no break now in the current of this flowing soul. The invisible king is declaring Himself the king of the invisible, in a way that will lead Him and the disciples to a moment of transfiguration. Still, He will seek retirement, and "*He cometh to Bethsaida;*"[2] and as this invisible king manifested His sovereignty over *material nature* at the lake-side, so

[1] Luke ix. 17. [2] Mark viii. 22.

here He showed his regnancy over *the life of man* in the restoration of sight to the blind man. The next step in its manifestation must be when the invisible glows and illumines from its own visible shrine, *Himself*. It has touched nature and man with the infinite; will it not confess its own hidden power?

The shadows were still growing more deep and wide. The invisible king was journeying on toward Hermon, passing through the towns of Cæsarea Philippi, not as a guest of earth, but as a scorned and hated visionary. Then was the time when, for them and for Him, it was best to know how the public sentiment and their private faith stood. "*Whom say men that I am?*"[1] said He, whose very devotion to the invisible had exiled the nation. "*And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, one of the prophets.*" They, even in this answer, which had no word of reference to His Messianic charac-

[1] Verse 27.

ter, had stated it in the most favorable light. For the popularity of Jesus had gone. Anything that had helped them to connect Him with the gigantic political movements for which their Messiah should come had long ago been entirely cast aside. Public opinion was digging deeper than ever the valley of His humiliation, and to His eyes there had come across his path the shadow of death. Then, with that quality which belonged to the king invisible, which counted not on the good opinion of the crowd, and looked deeply into the soul of the individual, ever content to found a kingdom upon the least visible foundation, He said: "*Whom do ye say that I am?*"[1] "*Thou*," said the ardent Peter, "*art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" The world of the future was created. Clad in humiliation, weary and sad in His solemn grandeur, its king stood near; and when He answered Peter the invisible energies of an eternal empire were in His hand.

[1] Verse 29.

"*Blessed art thou,*" said He, "*for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.*" The Invisible Himself had revealed to Peter the invisible kingship of Christ.

But the entire answer is the disclosure of this invisible kingdom. Jesus identifies this confession of His invisible and divine kingship with the future of Peter and the destiny of the world. "*Thou art Peter* (Πέτρος), *and on this rock* (πέτρα) *will I build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*" Then, as though He would have Peter see, as did He, the expansiveness of his faith in the invisible and the naturalness with which these powers of the invisible should come into such a capable grasp, He disclosed that unity of divine government which makes His treatment of man consonant with that other manifestation of God in the laws of the world, and said: "*I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,*" — for these are the powers of the invisible to which

you open your hand, — "*and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*," [1] — "so surely shall the forces of the invisible in the Invisible Himself and in your invisible life be one, and so certainly has your faith seized, yea, so does all faith in Me grasp, this Invisible God whose Christ I am." The church was founded and the lines of her immortal advance were made clear. Yet darkness was upon their souls, and His sky was overcast.

Peter had done a bold and brave thing. This confession of Peter, however, did not release the gaze of Christ from the swift-coming Calvary. He saw it all. The philosophy of the invisible life had its consummate fruit in self-sacrifice. The crown of thorns already hung in the air over His head. From that moment, He began to indicate to them how the life of the invisible in Him ran toward a complete

[1] Matthew xvii. 18, 19.

self-abnegation. He wanted them to see how, at last, He would be driven to throw His very life out upon the invisible. Always was the invisible personal and loving, because it was God, His Father; nevertheless, death by suffering and as an outlaw was sad to Him, partly because it was so terrible to them. In the face of such visions of the Messiah as would eliminate all dishonor from the life and destiny of the Jew, did He begin to point a steady finger to His cross. In a moment, when to Peter there had come words which had the tones of a universal triumph in them, He would make them see that the philosophy of the invisible life did not end in either confession or promise; and thus "*He began to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.*" [1] Mingled indignation and pain rush into the words of Peter's rebuke.

[1] Matthew xvii. 21.

The man of the world seems to speak, while the child of the invisible is silent. "*Lord!*" he says, with a more than Jewish pride in his Messiah, "*Lord! be it far from Thee;*" and with a total blindness to the quality of this invisible kingship, he adds, "*This shall never be unto Thee.*" He cannot yet conceive of the immortal sovereignty of the invisible. He has not yet seen the transfiguration, nor felt the power of the event which explains the glory of the transfiguration not less than that of death, — the resurrection. It is the slave of the visible and earthly who speaks. The reply came, "*Get thee behind me, Satan!*" — for it was Satanic to think of frustrating the progress of this king of the invisible. "*Thou art an offence unto me.*" What royalty hath this invisible king! "*For thou savourest not the things that be of God,*" — "thou hast not entered into the secrets of the invisible," — "*but of the things that be of men,*" — "thou hast confessed the bondage of the visible."

Then follow the great assertions which state the ethics of the invisible life. It is an unfolding of what Christ meant when He said: "*Follow me.*" Self-denial stands out, with the simple but distinct prominence which its relationship to such a philosophy of life must give it. "*If any man would come after me,*" — the hiding-place as well as the manifestation of God, — "*let him deny himself,*" — let him bury out of sight the visible, expedient, and earthly, — "*and take up his cross and follow me.*"[1] There the secret of all great life was made an open one, in the voluntary taking up of the cross. Criminals, who bore it with shame and by constraint, did not attach to it a vileness which a noble taking of it up in the self-determining soul might not remove. In its new associations with a willing and heroic devotion to the invisible, which stands behind majorities who sneer and respectability which scorns, there was to come that which should make

[1] Verse 24.

it a symbol of sainthood forever. It would thenceforth image the fact, in which life was discovered in death! and it would suggest the very nature of the event of earth, which, imitated in timid but sincere lives, should prove the death of the Galilean peasant to be, through all its eras, the most living fact in all the world.

The teaching of the succeeding words is knit together by a logic which has thus brought out the fact that there is no real victory in the divine life, save the triumph of the invisible; a logic which, also, as we shall see, makes the transfiguration, and, at last, the resurrection, two characteristic moments in its sure advance. But before either of these scenes can come, Jesus in His invisible kingship must make clear the profound sympathies of this invisible kingdom with certain aspects of truth and certain duties of the hour. Those disciples must have been conscious of how inevitably out of such a conception there should come the truth, "*Whosoever shall save his life*

shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." "*For my sake,*" — what a sovereignty of the invisible did that phrase disclose! Visibly an outcast and fugitive, as truly as when in Mary's lap in the manger "a king without regalia, a God without his thunder," He was then, as ever, offering them no abstract philosophy of the invisible, but a concrete fact, namely, Himself, as the beginner, teacher, inspirer, and guide of an invisible life in them. "*For my sake:*" it was a word that made one the secret of their lives and His, and made the last visible thing which they clung to — Himself — a gate into the invisible.

It will be noticed that in the progress of this teaching, severe as it is to the minds of those disciples, Jesus relies on the love they bear Him, and hence upon the magic of Himself, to save them from the despair into which they were so likely to fall from the heights of such lofty truth. This is illustrated when He asks them:

"*For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself?*" [1] Here the issue between the visible world and the invisible self is made plain, but only by putting these disciples upon the very summit of the lofty truth that man is in his essential nature an invisible being. It is a height which makes even our philosophy dizzy. The wide valleys almost charm us into leaping from so great an altitude. How must the disciples have felt the wondrous height and the rare atmosphere! But their teacher knows that He can keep the head from being dizzy, by making the appeal of this truth to their hearts. He saves a panic of the intellect, by putting Himself again before their love. "*For whosoever shall be ashamed of me,*" He says, with a depth of personal feeling in which His invisible self touches this newly announced invisible selfhood in them, "*of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory and in His*

[1] Verse 26.

Father's, and of the holy angels." It is the same truth brought out of the atmosphere of the absolute and made relative. But with this disclosure of the personal relationships, which such a truth has, there comes a new phase of this invisible kingship and His kingdom of the invisible. The invisible king is in the day of humiliation now. Beneath these plain garments is a sovereign, and under them is the hiding-place of a divine glory. "*Verily*," said the prophet of the invisible One, "*Thou art a God which hidest Thyself.*"[1] These disciples have not been mistaken in the truth they have apprehended. They do follow the king, but He is "*the King immortal and invisible*,"[2] and this fact Jesus has tried to teach them. By and by, this unseen majesty will burst forth. It does not now, because Jesus is founding a kingdom of the invisible. Shall the king of such a realm flaunt his royalty? Nay, His royal family must be children of the

[1] Isaiah xlv. 15. [2] 1 Timothy i. 17.

invisible. But the day of glory draweth nigh. He, the seer of the invisible, detects its light in the distance, as his eye flashes across the visible grave of Joseph of Arimathea. And so, when He tells them of these things, "*Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words*" in my invisible kingship on earth, "*of him shall the Son of man be ashamed*," He makes vivid the hour of glory, and adds, "*when*," in the confessed kingship of the invisible, "*He cometh in His own glory, and in His Father's and of the holy angels.*"

There is but one danger now, — they will put this hour of glory on the other side of their life on earth. But that they may be assured that this kingdom of the invisible is to have its moments of glorious victory here, He says: "*There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death until they see the kingdom of God.*" [1]

The instant has now come in the pro-

[1] Matthew xvi. 28.

cess of divine self-manifestation when the soul of man is so heavily weighted with the truth of the Invisible One in Christ that it lags behind, and, as we shall see, sleeps in the presence of the Incarnate God. In this account of the development of Christ's idea, we have not been forgetful of the fearful strain which these children of Judaism were asked to bear, that they might follow Him with an honest heart. Christ Himself, perhaps, never was so conscious of walking along a difficult way. For here that line, where the visible and invisible meet, impossible except to divine feet, along which Jesus had to travel, becomes clearly evident to thought. If men had ever seen God truly, they would have been so familiar with the invisible that they would not have expected a visible kingdom, however gorgeous and sublime. They had not seen Him, and Jesus must reveal Him. In person and influence, He must so make the Invisible One visible that He and His kingdom

should ever after be known as invisible. The very success of the Incarnation, if indulged for a moment, would have ruined the result it aimed at. The seen Christ must incarnate the unseen God, — a task for Deity alone. Up to this time the Incarnation has been so complete that where the "*Word*" is most undoubtedly "*made flesh*," there the proclamation is most clearly made of the Invisible God. The development of the life of Christ is the growth of this profound idea and purpose, in apprehensible statement or illustrative event. Event so follows statement that each movement in His career is an additional proof of how perfectly He comprehends the mighty unit of His life. Where His lips have just ceased to move with the utterance of His profound faith in the invisible, He throws His life, until, at last, on Calvary, His very being, upon the unseen. Yet, at every step, He is less a weird and spectral abstraction, and more a concrete, personal thing. The Son of

God and the Son of man are one in His enlarging life. He must invite and develop their love, even if it begins in a conception of Him after a most visible sort; but at the right instant, He must, in His love for them, turn its tide away, lest they lose in the incarnation the Incarnate One. "For about an eight days" these forces were at work, as never before. Death by the cross lay yonder before the Christ. The longer He spoke, the more certain to them was Calvary; and eight days of thought must have left them between two worlds of thought and hope: "one dead, the other," seemingly, "powerless to be born." Still they followed, led on, they knew not why. Nineteen centuries after, we can seem to see the gravitation; for all these invisible forces were converging into an event, inevitable alike to the Christ and the spiritual culture of those disciples, — **the transfiguration.**

LECTURE III.

The Place of the Transfiguration.

"Forever through the world's material forms,
Heaven shoots its immaterial; night and day
Apocalyptic intimations stray
Across the rifts of matter."

LECTURE III.

The Place of the Transfiguration.

"He took Peter, James, and John, and went up into a mountain apart to pray." — LUKE ix. 28, with MATTHEW xvii. 1, and MARK ix. 2.

IT is not that the earthly spot of this significant event may be determined that the student of Christ's life stops at the mountain's base and looks upward towards its summit, but that, from His choice of the mountain the character of His companionship, and the acknowledged purpose of prayer, there may be found the place in the geography of the soul's life where naturally such an incident might occur. The traditional view points to Mount Tabor. But perhaps St. Jerome neglected to note how, from ancient times, it had been crowned with fortifications and known the publicity

of a city upon its summit. Nevertheless, the churches which have crowded to the supposed spot, and that monastery, now thirteen centuries old, stand to note the vitality of the tradition. Nothing has so pointed away from Tabor, to a mountain near Cæsarea Philippi, as the improbability of an unmentioned journey which must have been made within the few days intervening, and the fact that Mark, after recording events subsequent to the transfiguration, says, "*They departed thence and passed through Galilee.*"[1] It was, most probably, one of the spurs of Hermon, where the vapors of summer floating in that loftier atmosphere are condensed at the touch of the snow-crowned summit, and those clouds are formed, one of which may have swept before the gaze of the disciples while they looked upon the transfigured One.

Uncertain as this must ever be, the place of the transfiguration of Jesus Christ

[1] Mark ix. 30.

in the unnamed holy land of the spiritual life is more sure. The mountain-height on which naturally such an issuing forth of the Infinite through the finite ever occurs, is a result from the operation of forces, of which the strata of the spiritual world preserve the record. As a physical relationship appears to the geologist between Sinai, Hermon, and Calvary, so these seemingly isolated points in the experience of the human soul may be seen to have been uplifts from the level plain of consciousness, by the action of resistless spiritual forces. In a sense more Emersonian than Swedenborgian, "the world is the mirror of the soul." [1] As actual, to the true soul, are the facts of the ideal as are those of the real world.[2] No exhaustive catalogue of the distances which separate them or of the relationships

[1] *Address to Divinity Students.* Emerson's *Works*, vol. i.

[2] Lotze, *Mikrocosmos*, Book IV. chap. iii.; Hill, *Theology of the Sciences*, p. 29.

which bind them has been made ; yet they act and re-act throughout the universe. Christ's whole life showed with what sovereignty they move on. And here we find that same unity of life with which His nature dominated His career, uniting such of these facts into one that, whatever doubt there may be in our geography of the seen world, there can be none in that of the unseen as to where the transfiguration — the flash of the unseen glory through the seen humiliation — did and must ever occur.

I. In Jesus Christ, the seen and unseen were in unique companionship. So His attitude to the seen was always in perfect harmony with His relations unto the unseen world. By His being the revelation of the one, He became, especially by His use and treatment of the other, its revealer also. So vital was this union in Him that whatever He did, involving a use of nature, became a revelation of His grace. Of this fact we have proof, not only in the

use He made of mustard-seed and lily as they were taken up in the language of His lips, but also in that use which He made of Genesareth and Hermon as they were taken up in the language of His life. Here, His seeking the mountain is a subtle but powerful revelation of the quality and meaning of the next truth which He had to speak. And, as it was truth which must be uttered without words, so, silently, He goes into the mountain to pray.

This use of that mountain brings again to mind that unity of life which ever came from the unity of His nature. Twice before has He sought the mountain for prayer. Each time He reveals the quality of the unseen kingdom which He has come to found, and its profound relation to that consciousness of infinity, of which I have spoken. Once, a vision of earthly glory had swept like a flood over those who heard Him. The thought of the Messianic triumph had seized the people. They were about to compel Him into the

championship of their idea of material splendor and the leadership of their hosts. Just as now, going up the mountain of transfiguration, He sees His cross in the gulf between His idea and theirs, so then He must have seen the coming solitude of Calvary as He sought the solitude of those mountains. Before that time, He had done likewise. It was for a moment's solitude before the sermon on the mount. In both cases, we may see how Jesus dignifies nature, in His use of it. What ministries He here shows, lying unemployed by needy souls, in the world of mountain and valley! The body and soul are so related that the one, touched by the pure air, and the other, influenced by the healthful word of Christ, seem to live a new life, each for the other, in a new universe. Sacred enough to Him was every breath of that mountain air. It blessed a body through which a truth should soon be more surely seen, which would explain nature and the soul. The sublimity of

that suggestive spot ministered its embodied charm to Him whose sublimity should make earth the most interesting spot in the universe. That wide outlook under the quiet stars became somewhat harmonious with the sweep of horizon which He entertained and gave to the human soul.

The truth of nature fell, with a primal ease and naturalness, into the hands of the truth itself. It is not strange that the self-manifestation of God in Christ should so use nature as that it would appear to have something of the same truth to tell which was the message of Christ. It was a truth told, however, in a different language.

It is a quite superficial theism whose God goes not out contemporaneously and harmoniously in Creation in nature and in Incarnation in Jesus Christ. The correspondent truths of nature and Christ are at root one truth, working itself out in its dual revelation. Creation and Incarnation

lie in the nature of Love. The subjective personal God urges Himself into objectivity of life. Creation is the manifestation of God in the unconscious objectivity of nature; Incarnation is the manifestation of God in the conscious subjectivity and objectivity of Jesus, the Christ. In Christ, God sees Himself as perfectly manifested.

Out of these relations of nature and Christ in God came the Christ's attitude toward and use of nature. Looking upon Him, as that poetic soul who receives such dainty patronage in certain circles, He seems the mystic Voice which could assert: —

> "To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

As a man only, He might have climbed up the mountain side that He should have such moments as were Wordsworth's, of which the poet of Rydal Mount has said:

> "Oft in these moments such a holy calm
> Would overspread my soul that bodily eyes

Were entirely forgotten, and what I saw
Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
A prospect of the mind."

But the attitude of the Christ toward nature was not that of a listener for its secret. He Himself was its secret. In that "presence which disturbs" the beholder,

"With the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
And rolls through all things,"

it was His to feel the thrill of a preëxistent life, — a life which was His before the worlds were created; to be conscious on earth of the hour in eternity when by Him the worlds were framed, when the Word which was in the beginning was with God, as it was God; and, as "the Word made flesh," to see nature in the light of Himself. As the Incarnate God,

He had a unique attitude toward nature. The God-created "lily of the field" must appear in its real significance to God's Incarnate Self. If it was truth of lily or of mustard seed, it passed through the divine consciousness which in simple self-utterance had said, "*I am the Truth.*" [1] As He travelled up that mountain path, He must have realized this and vastly more. He could not tell the disciples, for they were already unable to bear intelligently the gifts of truth which He had disclosed to them.

All this, from the divine side, was in the experience of Him whose body, then and there, stood for nature's achievement. Behind it stood the entire creation. As that weary body made its way up that mountain side, it seemed to be stepping upon an unread page in its own biography. That mountain had been lifted by a world-pain "with which the whole creation had been groaning until now." [2] Along together, in

[1] John xiv. 6. [2] Romans viii. 22.

this use of nature, do the facts of the Creation and the Incarnation lie, as they are seen to lie in the being and life of God. It was natural that God should go forth into Incarnation in Christ. From the upper side of the problem of Christ's human life we note a supreme naturalism. This is the side of the Incarnation. But it was also natural to nature itself that, at last, a goal should appear which should justify these painful experiences, ever brighter as their results seemed to be in their long reign. From the lower side of the problem of Christ's human life, also, we note a supreme naturalism. This is the side of Creation. Thus nature, coming up out of infinity, moving on in circles of development with an infinite dynamic, found itself, through the continuity and in the goal of Creation, with the human body of the Nazarene. The Christ, coming down out of that same infinity, the self-manifestation of God, was conscious of the Infinite in this same human body. Creation

and Incarnation were thus one in the Christ of God, as before the morning stars sang together they were one in God. Jesus had, in His self-conscious life, the objectivity of nature and the subjectivity of God. That mountain marked a moment in nature when, and a place where, the two lines of God's manifestation in Creation and in Incarnation were approaching each other, though with agony which pained the planet in its travail. "*The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now*," — this was the fact beneath Hermon's white-crowned magnificence. And Jesus Christ, with these unspoken meanings which nature had to Him alone, went forward to these scenes of transfiguration, where the ever-fresh agony of that world-pain, growing yet more intense and keen, as in man's history the *creature* should groan "*for the manifestations of the sons of God*," [1] should be, for a moment, apprehended in the is-

[1] Romans viii. 19.

sues it bore, and understood in the glory of its hero, saint, martyr, and God.

II. The place of the transfiguration was not only a place where Jesus was thus related to nature: it was a place also where He related Himself with the universe in prayer. The fact of its being a place of prayer before it was the place of transfiguration will furnish us with opportunity to find, in the attitude and bearing of Jesus, the nature of prayer and the naturalness of such an event as the transfiguration to the praying Christ. Prayer, as it is seen in Jesus of Nazareth, involves a perfect faith in the Supreme Power of the universe as good.[1] Not only does God reveal Himself personally in Christ as the eternal goodness, but Christ in His attitude toward the universe outside of Him seems constantly to confront a Power Supreme which is paternal in the aims of government and beneficent in their accomplishment. The *Zeit-Geist*, which

[1] Liddon, *Some Elements of Religion*, p. 164.

is thought to offer no prayer, nevertheless confronts in its science, which is supposed to give the basis for this hostility, a universe whose laws seem the method of a Power whose end in government is good.[1] The Infinite Somewhat seems to have in aim, at least,

> "One far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves."

Advancing science is nearer, than on yesterday, to the confession that the "All-Great *is* the All-Loving, too." With Jesus, the fact at the base and summit of things was the Infinite Goodness. Modern thought seems about to grant that this, the first truth of the Incarnation, is the last revealed truth of Creation. Science is crowding it to the front. Mr. Huxley is unable even to cry down the "tone of optimism" in the speech of the evolutionist;

[1] *The Supernatural in Nature*, p. 148; Fowle, *Reconciliation of Religion and Science*, p. 210; Stewart and Tait, *The Unseen Universe*, p. 224; Hanna's *Life and Letters of Thomas Erskine*, 4th Edinburgh ed., p. 360.

and he tells us that Du Bois Reymond, in a lecture on Leibnitz, "seriously argues that the doctrine of evolution supplies a scientific equivalent to that philosopher's remarkable conception of the best of all possible worlds." [1] It is more significant when we remember the littleness of our world, in the eyes of the modern spirit, and are not therefore compelled logically to deal with it in quite so absolute a manner.

It is certain that, whatever may be the force of the statement that nature seems full of cruelty and pain, there is a silent approach unto higher forms of life. Natural order has its law of death and resurrection. With the sacrifice of the unfit comes the survival of the fittest. The laws which have made it so hard for man to exist at all, the severest of them, are the ones which seem most heavily loaded with his destiny. Man has travelled over boiling abysses, from the obedience of one

[1] Article "Evolution," *Encyc. Britannica.*

law to the obedience of the next. The hardest to obey was the safest stone he could risk himself upon. The event toward which the Supreme Power has aimed was so important, the aim was so direct, that the track along which force flies is walled with adamant. It is always flying: *nature* is its path, being, as it is, *the about to be born*. Now and then, it looks like retrogression. The Pterodactyls and Dinosaurians have ceased to exist, and thus the two higher orders of reptiles have departed. But the aim of God was sure. The law of one life has broken, or rather opened out, into the law of another. Birds have superseded the Pterodactyls, and mammals have walked in the wake of the Dinosaurians. The nature, which became the graveyard of the lower, became the cradle of the higher. Like John, from Patmos, our science sees "*an angel standing in the sun.*" [1]

But, it is said, grant to prayer its vision

[1] Revelation xix. 17.

of a good power, yet that power has a method, with which prayer must have and can have nothing to do, which is law. The answer is not only that, if this is the method of a good power, the soul wants not to change it, that the highest prayer is "*Thy will be done;*" but that, also, prayer is the act by which the soul puts itself in such relationship to this law that it comes into contact with forces which would not touch it otherwise, which it is the will of goodness to give after its order, which is law. Prayer is the step of the soul into the region of the higher law. We see a lower law break or open out into a higher in nature. That seems constitutional. Do they not thus break — the lower into the higher — until the Power Supreme, who is His own method, girds whole with Himself? Each law's authority is taken up into the one above it; and prayer is not a thrust at the authority of the lower law, which touches it, but a movement toward the very source of its author-

ity, — a movement which brings it within the range of a higher law and its benefit.[1] This view of the nature of the law and its source, which has endured much repetition, seems never to have been destroyed.

Christ was one with this source; and He was true to the method of the divine nature, as it affects us in prayer. In His prayers, we see that He lives not in one universe in action, and in another in prayer; but that it is the same universe with one government, whose laws are a unit.[2] By His native and preëxistent relation to the universe, by what the laws of the universe were to Him through His sinlessness and positive holiness, He, in prayer, touched the law along which the infinite glory travels, and His face was

[1] Salmon, *The Reign of Law and other Sermons*, p. 32; Romanes, *Christian Prayer and General Laws*, p. 64.

[2] Kennard, *Unity of the Material and Spiritual Worlds*, p. 116; Abbott, *Through Nature to Christ*, p. 129.

flooded with radiance. Yet all this was in harmony with the same laws of the divine order with which the weakest disciple has to do, and does not injure the conception of prayer which is a comfort to devout souls.[1] What, by nature, was His relation to the universe, we, praying in His name, through His intercession, obtain by grace; and by our taking hold of God, through a personal holiness founded upon His, we touch laws, in prayer, higher than those whose benefit is ours without it. Many are the blessings which thus lie above us, just as, until that night, there was waiting, in the very heart of the universe, a transfiguration for Him.

III. The place of the transfiguration was a place of solitude and yet of companionship. I put the fact of human companionship alongside the fact of Christ's Divine solitude in order that in it we may see, first, another disclosure of the spirit of Christ in His ideal and real life; and,

[1] Jellett, *The Efficacy of Prayer*, p. 28.

secondly, that we may gain the lesson of the uses of Christian solitude and companionship.

In the nature of Christ, we have seen how the ideal and real were both actual to Him, and were united naturally in His life. The ideal reserves its treasures, for the solitary moments, in merely human lives. A man of the greatest intellectual power will hardly do more than to bring into contact, even in his intellectual life, these two worlds, as we call them. For the reason that in man's spiritual life the two worlds are not one, he is accustomed to talk of two sets of laws, not always even harmonious: one for the realm of the real, the other for the ideal. Nature and spirit, earth and heaven, the finite and infinite, have been so divorced in the actual life of mankind that the mind has recognized two systems of government. In Jesus Christ, however, they are one. The one integral Life makes an unbroken universe. Truth and

life are one in the Truth and the Life. By what Jesus Christ is to the soul of the Christian, each disciple has in Him an unshattered universe, whose "natural supernaturalism" flows from the Word, by whom, in the beginning, it existed.[1] All this Jesus shows in His transfiguration. It began in a place and moment of solitariness. The weary disciples, however, were soon within its influence, as it burst forth into all the realms of Christ's infinite nature. The higher it reaches into the ideal world, the deeper it goes into the real world. As it rises into the ideal realm of Moses and Elias, it runs down to rouse the sleeping realism of Peter, James, and John. Out of solitude the transfigured One goes into companionship, which, on the one side, takes Him further into the solitude of God, and, on the other, takes Him deeper into the companionship of man. It all shows the unity, which was infinite in its inclusiveness, in the nature and life of Christ.

[1] John i. 1, 2.

These, solitude and companionship, each modifying the other, each the more divine for the other's influence, are thus so distinctly used, and are yet so unitedly one fact in the life of Jesus, that by them we see how inevitably the spot of His transfiguration takes its place as most dear to both the practical and the ideal realms of human life. It was not His first hour of solitude. His very nature made Him solitary. By the infinity within Him, the man Christ Jesus was alone. That infinity of nature urged Him along lines which would have made Him lonely, had not this unique soul been self-centred in God. "*I have trodden the winepress alone*"[1] was not a prophecy only, but the record which the consciousness of Christ made of its past. "*I am not alone, because the Father is with me*"[2] was the record which His consciousness of infinity in God made of itself. "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*"[3] was that line of autobiography

[1] Isaiah lxiii. 3. [2] John xvi. 10. [3] Matt. xxvii. 46.

which records the moment when He was to realize that there was only one Infinite, and that it was He. In that solitude ended the education of Jesus, and in that loneliest moment the ideal fact of His Deity became real to Him and the world. In that hour He found in His own person the companionship of God.

But in all these moments this *Son of God* was also the *Son of man.* In the development of His self-consciousness, from a child, these conceptions had ever gone together. A heavenly and earthly companionship was His. On the one side, there was the Infinite Love; on the other, the loveless race of men. As His soul grew receptive and intelligent of the Divine Love, He felt more keenly the woe of human sin. It was the gathering meaning of these two facts to Him that led Him to take Peter, James, and John with Him. As the one heavenly fact broke with its inherent glory, He would have the other earthly fact blessed by its radiance. The

glory of God and the good of man are ever one in the life of Christ. It is not that He may have some private and individual renewal of the old glory which He had with the Father in the beginning, but that, as He becomes more conscious of His own power, men may become more sure of their possessions in Him. Christ is always saying, "*The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given unto them, that they may be one.*"[1]

Thus, the deeper we go into His native solitude, the nearer we come to the reason of this companionship. The lonely Christ was lonely for man's sake. His was not the lofty isolation of an exclusive and imperious dignity, but that of a Being who would so solve the problem of human life, by being alone, that whatever He was, or might have, would be inclusive of humanity. He had, as a mere man, the loneliness of genius. It will be necessary to read only the greatest, who have not accepted His lordship over their souls, to

[1] John xvii. 22.

find the depth of that solitariness.[1] Alone in the times in which He lived, He rises out of that multitude which thronged the Orient with a dignity and grandeur all His own. Consider Him with Earth's great names, and His own comes forth with a quiet but sure glory which leaves none with which to compare Him. The very cosmopolitanism of His thought seems only to make Him more supreme in His solitude. In the special realms of truth, sentiment, and purpose, where He seems likeliest to find peers, He is most peerless; and He appears all the more solitary in this very fact that He so surpasses the supreme souls in each sphere of man's interior life that no one sphere can claim Him as peculiarly its own. The very peculiarities of His solitude make Him more solitary. Other souls which are removed into such lofty realms by their native height share the frigidity of the exalted space, and partake of the great distances which separate them from man-

[1] Cf. Renan's *Life*, concluding words.

kind. They constantly reveal a life to which they can give no invitation to the crowd below. Where Christ is highest He is nearest to men. At the moment of His supreme exaltation, He is communicating its vision and urging the race through the gates He has opened. When He brings His life up to the truth which He has found in His soul, and throws Himself out upon its trusted infinitude, He is dying for the privilege of man to reach just such mental and moral manhood. Alone, man for whom He dies is His companion. Suffering — the very fact which binds men in the companionship of grief — was the fact on which Jesus rose at once into a supremacy none could share, and into a companionship with every child of sorrow for whose deliverance He then gave His life. Solitude and companionship, — the very loneliness of His nature making him the more sensitive in conscious grief over man's woe, at the moment when He saw the world, for which He was dying,

give the death-bearing blow! On and on, into deeper solitude, did He go, as the long agony of Calvary lingered, until, at last, of God Himself He seemed bereft, as He cried, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" [1] when He was so driven to identify Himself with the Infinite One that, in perfect solitude of earth and heaven, God and man, who had both seemed to forsake Him, were made one in His inclusive soul. At the moment of His crucifixion by mankind, every child of Adam was in His heart. "*Father,*" He prayed, "*forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" [2]

So it comes that the possibility of our companionship with Christ lies in the fact that He was solitary in nature and suffering. May we so partake of His life that we shall have no moments when our personal blessings shall not reach mankind.

[1] "That voice of utter loneliness in the death-struggle, that entirely credible utterance, because it could never have been invented." — SCHENKEL, *Characterbild Jesu*, p. 308.

[2] Luke xxiii. 34.

LECTURE IV.

The Transfigured Christ.

"Dei Voluntas Rerum Natura Est." — AUGUSTINE.

"In vast inorganic masses God discovers Himself as the supreme, creative, and sustaining force. In the graduated orders of vital power which range throughout the animal and vegetable worlds God unveils His activity as the fountain of all life. In man, a creature exercising conscious reflective thought and free self-determining will, God proclaims Himself a free, intelligent agent. Man may, if he will, reveal much more than this of the glory of God; he may shed forth by the free movement of his will rays of God's moral glory, of love, of mercy, of purity, of justice. But whether each man will make this higher revelation depends not upon the necessary constitution of his nature, but upon the free coöperation of his will with the designs of God. God, however, is obviously able to create a being who will reveal Him perfectly and of necessity as expressing his perfect image and likeness before his creatures. All nature points to such a being as its climax and consummation. And such a being is the archetypal manhood assumed by the Eternal Word. It is the climax of God's creation; it is the climax also of God's Self-revelation. At this point, God's creative activity becomes entirely one with His Self-revealing activity. The Sacred Manhood is a creature, yet it is indissolubly united to the Eternal Word. It differs from every other created being in that God personally tenants it. So far, then, are Incarnation and Creation from being antagonistic conceptions of the activity of God that the absolutely perfect creature only exists as a perfect reflection of the Divine glory. In the Incarnation, God creates only to reveal, and He reveals perfectly by that which He creates. 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.'" — LIDDON.

LECTURE IV.

The Transfigured Christ.

"And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white and glistering." — MATTHEW xvii. 2; LUKE ix. 29.

IT is time now for us reverently to look into that transfigured face. But before us stretch immeasurable distances in thought and sentiment; and we are compelled to look through nineteen hundred years of such constantly changing life as would warn us against expecting to discover the same radiance in the face of the Nazarene as was visible in what our age denotes as the earlier twilight hours, when belief was young and traditions blossomed everywhere. Indeed, our time, somewhat over-conscious that it is possessed of the critical spirit, and that thus it becomes the revealer and inter-

preter of past ages, has many voices which insist that it is manifestly impossible for us to have the same emotions or to learn the same lessons at the foot of Hermon as did these men, since the intellectual point of view and the spiritual atmosphere which may be ours are so radically different from those of Peter, James, and John, and since, to be plain, the problem which interests us is not at all the same problem to which they so willingly devoted their remarkable experiences.

Christian thought, however, declines to accept all this. On the contrary, it is maintained that while nearly nineteen centuries have rolled between us and them, the intellectual point of view and spiritual atmosphere which were contributed through them to the world have more than held their own, and that it is impossible for serious thinkers to escape them. As to the questions which confront us, it must be held that there is testimony on every hand to show that the problem which lies

most fundamental to any true science or complete philosophy, whose clamor for solution is just now pronounced, is at root precisely that to whose solution are given the flashes of glory which, after so many years of modifying life, still penetrate the night-air of the world. There is but one great problem in all times. Its ever-varying statement is the unimpeachable testimony to the agreement, in the presence of many differences, between the merely intellectual and the spiritual life. Philosophy will make the problem impersonal and intellectual; ethics will make it personal and spiritual. Modern life has the same mighty environment which from the beginning has interested, astonished, and bewildered man. That environment we call "*the universe.*" Our present thinking has insisted strongly that it knows and can deal with its physical nature and characteristics only. But our present thinking has insisted upon this, with such large admissions as to the postulates of knowledge

and ground of things, with such a wealth of metaphysical lore, supplying a somewhat rich vocabulary with such new terms as "atom," "energy," "correlation," "evolution," and the like, that it has taught the age how idealistic the surest realism becomes when it seeks to give any account of itself; and it has made it as certain that the nineteenth century will close with the eye of man resting on the infinite as it was that this century opened with the eye of man resting on the finite. That this infinite is not yet acknowledged to be the Infinite One of our creeds and love is of no more vital importance than it is that Force, which confessedly moves toward Goodness, is not called *Father*. One thing seems safe; and it often looks like the brilliant child of materialistic parents, — the *super-material*. One thing is certain, and appears as the once unacknowledged companion of physics; and that is metaphysics. What such storm and stress have joined together are not likely to be put asunder.

Our point of view may, therefore, be near enough to that of these simple-hearted disciples for us to feel that their panic is but the spiritual phase of our intellectual unrest, and that, being one at root, these problems are not wholly unrelated in their solution. "How have things come to be as they are, and, being in existence, why do they behave as they do?" — that is the problem of nineteenth-century thought. "What does our Master mean, and how will He justify what He has said?" — this was the problem in the minds of Peter, James, and John. Let us note how nearly they come together: one so intellectual and abstract, the other so spiritual and concrete. Jesus had been speaking to the disciples of an unseen kingdom which was the kingdom of the unseen. Never yet had it seemed to have any reference to the enigmas of life and phenomena with which Thales and Plato had dealt. Our recent thought has been speaking to the most intelligent of an unseen kingdom, which is

also the kingdom of the unseen. Never yet, to many at least, has it seemed to have any reference to the wonders of love and grace which Fénelon and Augustine have considered. It is only necessary, however, to linger with the physicist with his metaphysics, and to call in the Christian moralist with his keen appreciation of the sensible and material world, to see that what will solve one problem must solve the other. The universe is one. John and Clerk-Maxwell, Peter and Mr. Tyndall, James and Pasteur, have questions to be answered which come close to each other in one root. The disciples of Jesus will find the inspirations and consolations of the spiritual life in the Mediatorial Christ, "by whom the worlds were created;" and His transfiguration will be the lustrous moment in which they may catch a glimpse of the nature of things. The disciples of honest thought seem sure to find the postulates and conclusions of the intellectual life in a created world, whose

transfiguration will be seen, only when the nature of things is found to be the *Logos* of God, — the *word* unspoken until the Incarnation, then spoken, — "the ground-fact," the "final end" of all things.

Certainly, our most reckless materialism would confess, since matter has grown intractable and will not submit to any materialistic account of itself, that such an event as the transfiguration is reported to have been would be full of interest as revealing, perhaps, some of the possibilities of matter, and indicating the presence either of unknown potencies and laws, or at least of unknown manifestations of those which were familiar. Materialism has helped to do so much for theology that a scientific theologian would accept this proposition, and add to it a belief in the historic place of that scene amidst the phenomena of our world, which as yet no arguments have pronounced absurd. As they come together, it will be found that what Christian thought has in the life

of Jesus is just what is demanded by the philosopher for the centre of a complete cosmology. There is that in matter which makes it unaccountably instinct with the forces of development. Into perpetually higher phases of existence it is ever pushing itself. It is bounded and traversed with laws, which seem systematically related one to another. Their operation is such that the whole body of laws points unmistakably upward. The drift of things is much more surely upward, to some such glorification and manifestation as is this which we are studying, than it is downward, to disorganization and death. Man crowns it all, — the microcosm, refusing to believe in death, carrying up into his being the surge of these upward-working energies and determining his own destiny. He can at least sing this: —

"Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail?
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me;
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale."

Somehow, at its centre, there are to be found the key to all this movement and the reason of its direction. The cause of it must be its reason. A cause must be adequate in quality as well as in quantity, for effects. Whatever that "cause," "reason," or "final end" is, matter has within it that which makes ascent and has prophecy. It is with such facts as these that one grows ready to read certain partially neglected passages of Scripture.

The only one of the three Evangelists present on the mount of transfiguration was John. It is a significant fact that, preceding and along with what seems his reference to the Transfigured One, there is given that conception of Jesus of Nazareth which, while it has most to suggest to the phases of thought to which attention has been drawn, most thoroughly illumines the event and makes it live with profoundest meanings. "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,*" he says, "*and,*" he adds, "*we beheld His glory, the glory*

as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." [1]

The Gospel according to John has been called "the new Genesis." The writer of the old Genesis had so far known God and His universe that he began the story with the simple but sublime statement: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" [2] The writer of the new had so far seen God in Christ, had so far discovered that this now spoken Word of God was primarily back of the physical universe in the depths of the unspoken, as the Idea and Ideal of Creative Power, and hence, as the final end and means by which He should act, that he began his account of the universe, in which he saw every physical feature and force bound up with spiritual events and forces, by saying: "*In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. By Him were all things made.*" [3]

Now, in the transfiguration of Christ,

[1] John i. 14. [2] Genesis i. 1. [3] John i. 1, 3.

the physical universe, with its laws and forces, is involved, as well as the imperial personage of the Christian faith. Here, however, in this doctrine of the *Logos*, in Creation and in Incarnation, there are to be found an intellectual point of view and a spiritual atmosphere which will enable us to see their relationship. In its very nature, this truth of the *Logos* is the illumination of all other truth. It must thus be tested, — "a light not to see, but to see with." Never until every such event in the life of the Nazarene be approached, so that we may look upon both Him and the physical universe from this point of view and in this atmosphere, can we be delivered from bewilderment and gloom.

This is not the place in which to review long and learned discussions on the meaning of this suggestive word. Athanasius has been followed with satisfactory precision in the assertion of its large double meaning, *Verbum et Ratio*.[1] Cardinal New-

[1] Excursus, in *Handy Volume Commentary on John.*

man's statement is important, in which he says: "A distinction had already been applied by the Stoics to the Platonic *Logos*, which they represented under two aspects, the ἐνδιάθετος, and the προφορικός, *i. e.*, the internal thought and purpose of God, and its external manifestation, as if in words spoken. The terms were received into the church; the ἐνδιάθετος standing for the Word, as hid from everlasting in the bosom of the Father, while the προφορικός was the Son sent forth into the world in apparent separation from God, with His Father's name and attributes upon Him and His Father's will to perform." [1]

The processes of Creation and Incarnation have already been spoken of as having their explanation and goal in Christ Jesus. From this, which is a different line of thought, the suggestion comes that the *Logos* — the once unspoken, but now spoken, word, the Reason of God — is the sublime fact in both. Creation is, "be-

[1] *History of the Arians*, vol. ii. 3, 2.

cause of Him," "according to Him," "in Him;" and since this Reason of God as manifested is mediatorial,[1] it is "through Him," and "by Him were all things made that were made." The Incarnation is this Reason spoken, uttered forth, embodied, — "the *Logos* was made flesh and dwelt among us." Unuttered, the *Logos* was the Reason for Creation, the Reason of Creation, Reason in Creation. Uttered, the *Logos* is the ever-present illumination and key of existence, — Jesus the Christ. From the beginning to the end, this is His office and nature. "Before all things," πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως "the first-born of all Creation," [2] and "*the First-fruits of them that slept.*" Jesus is thus the rational end of creation, because He was its reason in the beginning. To our wonder and darkness amidst the problems, He is "the Light of the world." As the unmanifested *Logos*, He is the motive power

[1] Steward, *Mediatorial Sovereignty*, vol. i. p. 202.

[2] Colossians i. 15.

and aim of all history; as the manifested and spoken *Logos*, He is the consummate flower, yet the Lord of the process, the reason of the movements by which He came. He, the Reason of every law and force, has come out into manifestation, travelling in the chariot of every force and along the avenue of every law, and being now Incarnate, flashes back through their mysteriousness the illumination of Himself, making them clear and radiant. He is the spirit, the informing and authoritative Fact of all laws, for He is Love; and law is only Love's order. He includes in his Person all laws, for Love is the all-inclusive law, — a law unto itself. Is not this the *desideratum* of all philosophy? Does not this Mediation in Him between finite and infinite, between absolute and relative, furnish thought with its initiative and goal? Is it not to answer the fundamental questions, to find the Reason for things as they are, and to see that this Reason, which was so satisfactory at the beginning that things

became, is yet their Reason; that this Personal Reason of the universe is its motive power, its goal, its glory? As this Fact, comes the Incarnate *Logos* with His transfiguration.

Occupying this position, every view of nature which denies what is called the supernatural is curiously inadequate and unphilosophical. Some such position as that held by the Christian student of the transfiguration seems a necessity. Naturalism becomes inefficient to deal satisfactorily with many facts which have a far-away and yet sure harmony with what is seen in Jesus Christ. There the Christian thinker grounds his "supernatural naturalism," and sees about him a strange sympathy. The realism which has been atheistic, now, in most unexpected quarters, looks toward idealism, which is pantheistic. The next birth-pang for the ultimate philosophy will be the passing through this impending discussion. Afar, it may be, but certain is the triumph of ideal-

realism, in this "*Ratio et Verbum*," this *Logos*, with its Christian theism granting the vision of God in Christ. It is obviously an incomplete account of matter and force which leaves out such a scene; and Philosophy has written her death-warrant unless she willingly and gladly follows out the evident movements of force in matter, the certain modifications of which matter is the subject, which, "far beyond the ooze and slime," so leap with the infinite motive power within them, and glow with the eternal and changeless reason, which, in the silence of some remote past, augured their existence and destiny. Christian philosophy enthrones the *Logos*, the Christ, as this Motive Power and Reason.

John did not feel that the glory of the *Logos* on Hermon was out of harmony with His nature and with the nature of the universe as seen in the light of Him. If, as seems John's idea, this *Logos* was and now is the organ and medium of creation,

then creation has no law broken, as He flashes forth His interior glory : nay, rather is the orderly process of nature illumined and justified, as its ancient Reason stands with it, upon it, having come to claim His own. Doubtless John's thoughts took a quite different direction from ours. It was a personal, concrete, and spiritual problem to him, while every such event as the transfiguration offers to our time an intellectual, abstract, impersonal problem. But John's conception of Jesus is as great as the soul. If we are right in the belief that we are to find the settlement of intellectual problems in spiritual truth, surely there is light for every questioning mind here.

John is not alone in such a conception of Jesus as makes Him unique, after this manner, in the universe. Paul's most profound students have found this same philosophy of things in his first letter to the Corinthians. "The absolute, universal mediation of the Son is declared as unreservedly from the first epistle to the

Corinthians," says Bishop Lightfoot, "as in any later statement of the Apostle."[1] It will be observed that this mediatorial function is as indispensable in the history of matter as in the history of the soul; and whatever Jesus Christ is to the human soul or to the physical world, as Mediator, He is because He is the *Logos*. As Martensen urges: "As Mediator between the Father and the world, it appertains to the essence of the Son not only to have His life in the Father, but to live also in the world. As 'the heart of God the Father,' He is at the same time 'the eternal heart of the world,' through which the divine life streams into creation. As the *Logos* of the Father, He is at the same time the *Logos* of the world, through whom the divine life shines into creation."[2] There is this deep unity of teaching in the analytic and argumentative Paul and the mystic, intuitive John. Remarking upon

[1] Lightfoot on *Colossians*, p. 122.

[2] *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 189.

Paul's fine perception of this truth in the phrase "εἰς αὐτόν," Col. i. 15, 17, Lightfoot says: "All things must find their meeting point in Him from whom they took their rise, — in the Word as the Mediatorial agent, and through the Word in the Father." God is His own reason, as manifested in Christ. When we ask for the reason of things, we see it must not, cannot, be outside of God's own nature, and that it is the unuttered *Logos*. When that *Logos* is uttered in the Incarnation, then He testifies of Himself: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." [1] "The Word," adds the Bishop of Durham, "is the final goal as well as the Creative agent of the universe, . . . the goal . . . as He was the starting-point." "As all creation passed out from Him, so does it all converge again toward Him. He is not only the ἀρχή, but also the τέλος of creation." "In Him," says Paul to the Colossians, "were all things created, and by Him

[1] John xiv. 9.

all things consist."[1] Each of these Apostles has a philosophy of things whose vision comprehends a Christocentric universe.

Now let us apply all this to the problem of the transfiguration, and what a natural thing it was! Peter, James, and John had been the recipients of a special culture. Once before they had been with Him, — with this Living Centre of universal law and force whose name was Love, who thus made the motions and energies obedient to Love's dominion and triumphs, — where the darkest phase of the problem of the universe confronted them and Him. It wore only a less terrible visage then, at the side of the dead body of the daughter of Jairus,[2] than here, when He had persisted all the way to Hermon in announcing to them His own death. It must be noted that these three times in which Jesus vouchsafed to these three disciples His special culture — namely, the raising

[1] Colossians i. 15. [2] Luke viii. 41.

of the daughter of Jairus, the transfiguration, and the scene in dark Gethsemane — were but three steps in discovery, three lessons on the same theme. That theme was the Invisible Kingship of Himself in this invisible kingdom, which also was the kingdom of the Invisible. At the bedside where the little girl lay dead, the physical was supreme, the natural had its confessed victory over the spiritual. But at the approach of this living Centre of all laws, this Force from whom and to whom are all forces, a new factor came into the equation ; and, because that factor was Incarnate Love, the all-inclusive Law, the Authority and Power Supreme, the result was changed. The law of death opened into the larger law of life : there was no infraction ; but the dead lived. "*She is not dead, but sleepeth.*" In the all-encircling presence of Life there is no death. The *Logos* which was the Reason of all Law was there and was supreme. So harmonious was this new "Order" with the

old order of nature that, into the wonder and mystery which followed the raising of the maid from the dead, He inserted the plain and realistic words: "*Give the child some food.*" The touch of the higher — yea, of the Highest — Law, which was Love, had opened the way for the ministry of the lower; and what we call the supernaturalism of raising the child was so natural that the next thing after the miracle was the demand for physical nutriment. The *Logos* is the Law of all laws; in Christ Jesus, the lowest is harmonious with the highest.

Now, at the moment of His transfiguration, Peter, James, and John, after days of long misunderstanding of what this unseen kingdom and this kingdom of the unseen meant, were again in the presence of the Unseen King. A new phase of His work was here to be begun. Says Godet: "This moment marks the apogee of the public ministry of Jesus, and, if we may venture to say it, the point of tran-

sition from action to passion. A royal pathway had been originally opened to Him: it led through temptation and moral progress from innocence to holiness, — this was the first stage of the journey; then through a glorious transformation, physical and spiritual, from holiness to glory. . . . Jesus had reached that point of His existence when, according to the royal law, of which we have been speaking, He was to raise Himself by means of a transformation out of the form of existence which belongs to earth into the heavenly state. The transfiguration was the first step in this glorious ascent. That light which from His inner being, illumined from above, irradiates His body and makes even His very raiment to glister is the beginning of His glorification. These two messengers from a higher world, who present themselves to Him, are ambassadors come to meet Him and to introduce Him into the heavenly habitations. Lastly, that cloud, mysterious emblem of the Father's presence, is, as it

were, the chariot in which the Holy One and the Just is to ascend into the world of glory. But what happens now? The light disappears; the heavenly messengers vanish; the cloud is withdrawn. Jesus remains; He is seen amongst his disciples the same as before; and soon, as if nothing had happened, He comes down the mountain with his disciples, who had been witnesses of the scene. . . . Jesus had it in His power to accept this triumphant departure; and it was right that God should offer it to Him, for it was the reward due to His holiness. But in thus reëntering heaven, Jesus must have entered it alone. . . . Humanity unreconciled would have remained on earth struggling with the bonds of sin and death until its entire dissolution. . . . After having fulfilled the task set before the innocent man, — that of becoming the holy man, perfect in all respects, — Jesus, on the point of laying His hand on the crown which was the reward due His victorious course, turns away from

it, because He sees before Him another task, a final work indispensable for Him, if it is His purpose to ascend not alone, but followed by a great company, — the rehabilitation of fallen humanity." [1]

That at the transfiguration of Christ is preached a gospel which includes "the rehabilitation of humanity" no one can doubt. Rejecting whatever we may of the incidental material of Professor Godet's suggestive exposition, we must agree that the fact that the "Lamb of God" came into the world "to take away the sins of the world" includes and makes necessary the fact of His glorification, beginning on Hermon, triumphant at the grave of Joseph, and so complete in its transformation of His physical self that, on the day of ascension, earth and heaven are one; His sacred feet, so long homeless and once so cruelly scarred, miss the rocks of Olivet, and soon Jesus is at home again, the enthroned *Logos* on the right hand of God the

[1] *Studies in the New Testament*, p. 111.

Father. The atonement involves all these steps and processes. It is the reconciliation of all that is human to the divine.

Man is not pure spirit alone. The human personality is not redeemed by forces which simply recreate a new life in the soul. Such a life within as gives a pledge to the "body of our humiliation" every sound theology must offer as the complete salvation in Christ. Any real illumination of man in the transfiguration must illumine both mind and matter; and, in the splendor of such an event in the history of man as the shining face of that great Galilean, there are many suggestions which penetrate and glorify the far-off future of both. Jesus Christ was the Divine Self-revelation; He was also the revelation of man under God, — the illustrator of the possibilities of humanity in Him. "The glory which Thou hast given unto Me I have given unto them." The factor in the outworking of this glory with which we have to do is His holiness, — ever

above us, yet vouchsafed unto us by grace. It was His power, personal and resistless. In Him, through Him, it is ours, — this same personal loving harmony with the genius of things, with God. When the soul falls in love with Love, with Christ, it has bound itself to the *Logos*, the Reason of things. What, by His nature, He was in the beginning with God, we, through Him, obtain by grace. His transfiguration was thus, at once, the achievement of His holiness and a natural event in His life in His own universe. Something of its peculiar radiance belongs to any human being who begins and completes his holiness — in body, soul, and spirit — in the holiness of Christ Jesus. His power in prayer there is repeated in the prayer of every man and woman, who, going on toward some cross of self-sacrifice, stops on Hermon. One power alone is resistless with the Supreme Holiness, and that is holiness. Because that power is holiness — loving loyalty unto and harmony with

the Ruler of things through the manifested *Logos*, the plan and idea of things — there is no infraction of law.

> "The old order changeth,
> Giving place to new."

But there is an "order" in the "change," a law by which the ministry of the old passes over and up into the ministry of the new. His transfiguration and our transfiguration of body, soul, and spirit are of this "new order."

Christ Jesus began on Hermon, in Himself, the rehabilitation of man.[1] There

[1] In his *Gospel of the Resurrection* (p. 179), Canon Westcott shows with great force the personal and moral significance of the resurrection of the body. He says: "The noblest of the ancient moralists looked upon man's body as a hopeless burden and fatal hindrance to the soul, and in this they have been followed by the noblest non-Christian moralists in every age. The famous thanksgiving of Plotinus that he 'was not tied to an immortal body' expresses the common feeling of all who have not felt the power of the resurrection. But Christianity transfigures what philosophy would destroy. It shows that the corruption by which we are weighed down does not belong to our proper nature, and is not

full redemption began to appear. Humanity saw Him as its "Living Head." Life necessarily bound up with it forever. It lays open with a deeper and more searching criticism than a system of morality could direct the internal struggles to which the '*flesh*' must give occasion and the inevitable defeats which we must suffer in our efforts toward the divine life. Plato does not describe more sadly than St. Paul the afflictions by which we are beset while yet oppressed by 'the body of humiliation' (Phil. iii. 21). Or, to take an example from a different sect and age, M. Aurelius does not express more keenly than St. John a sense of the evils of the present life. But there is an immeasurable chasm between the Apostles and Platonists or Stoics. 'We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened,' St. Paul writes, 'not for that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up by life' (2 Cor. v. 4). The better change for which he longed was not the destruction but the ennobling of his body, so that it might 'be fashioned like unto Christ's body of glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. And the power by which this transformation should be effected was the simple contemplation of Christ in His essential majesty. Nay, in some sense, the change is already begun on earth, so far as that we can look forward with full hope to its accomplishment; for 'we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image

is transfigured, if the transfigured One is Saviour and Lord of the whole being. Not alone in the resurrection, but in this earlier event of transformation, which is the glorification in Christ of man's earthly life, are our "*bodies members of Christ.*" [1] "From glory unto glory," — this is the line of advance and its method. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, this mortal must put on immortality," — first, in the transfiguration of our whole life there must begin the process, which completes itself when the graves open. Our physical life lays hold of its redemption through the life of Christ in us. We are not to be "*unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*" Thus begins the redemption of the body.[2]

from glory to glory' (2 Cor. iii. 18). 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God:' such are St. John's words. 'And it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, *for we shall see Him as He is*'" (1 John iii. 2).

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 15.

[2] See last lecture, on "The Transfiguration and the Resurrection."

The transfiguration of the human body of Jesus Christ was thus an event in which all creation had a definite and unique illumination. Its whole past was lit up and at least partially explained. With possibilities in Christ, as the *Logos* of creation, such as these, every fartherest atom had quivered and advanced from the beginning. All natural forces were striving with high energy to this and the greater events beyond it.[1] He, in that hour of glory, was sending back upon the dark abysses of the groaning creation a gleam of the radiance which interpreted, as it penetrated, the long agony. "All creation," says Dean Alford, in his exposition of Paul to the Ephesians, — "all creation is summed up in Christ."[2] All laws of

[1] "To the very important thought that the God-man, Jesus Christ, is not merely a means of humanity, that is for the work of redemption in particular, but is also an end in Himself served by the entire world, too little importance has frequently been attached." — Dorner, *Person of Christ*, vol. iv. p. 332.

[2] Note on Ephesians i. 10, 11.

nature, with its pain and sin and death, all laws of grace, with its peace and holiness and life, rise into the law of love, in Him. Here, He only carries into the loftier jurisdiction of His personal life the laws and processes which lie in the bursting seed and the falling star.

> "The earth is crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God."

In the Christ was the point where that flame quivered for a moment; and Nature confessed in His transfiguration her kinship with the supernatural. In His presence, the highest dreams of poet and seer repeat again their musings: —

> "What if all animated natures
> Be but organic harps, diversely framed,
> That tremble into life as o'er them sweeps
> One intellectual breeze?"

Let us embrace, then, the large faith which feeds upon this splendid scene. Jesus transfigured is the transfiguration of the whole universe. Let us take up the strain of apostle and saint, and teach it to

our philosophy, — "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on the earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.[1] "The first born before all creation" is "Heir of all things;" and God "hath put all things under His feet." The destiny of this spurned and blasted planet is bound up with the destiny of the life in Christ. The *Logos* attaches every nook and cranny of the universe to Himself. "For it is the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens."[2]

To a larger study of this "reconciliation" we must address ourselves, as the

[1] Phil. ii. 10. [2] Colossians i. 19.

fact of evil and its results grow more plain in the presence of the Law and the Prophets, — Moses and Elias, who "appeared in glory and talked with Him."

LECTURE V.

The Appearance of Moses.

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"And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with Him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass, as they departed from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: let us build three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud: saying, This is my beloved Son, hear Him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone." — LUKE ix. 30–36.

MICHAEL ANGELO has been surpassed by the strong chiseling of the human soul as it has written history and determined the chief forces of civilization. In a niche far more proportionately prominent than that in any fane of art and religion, has the historic spirit placed the Moses which it has

brought forth from its partial imprisonment in the past. As new lands of Canaan open before man's eager eye, and other Jordans are crossed by his resolute feet, he is impressed with the loftiness of that early leadership and the sublimity of that unknown grave. No figure of the early times is more surely rising out of the mists of antiquity and assuming his true place in the annals of his race than is Moses, the lawgiver of Israel and the benefactor of mankind. The splendor of that burning bush flashes in the night of every modern gloom, and the face of which he wist not that it shone[1] looks out from the morning hours of a new day. Says Lowell: —

> "Never to see a nation born
> Hath been given to mortal man,
> Unless to those who on that summer morn
> Gazed silent when the great Virginian
> Unsheathed his sword, whose fatal flash
> Shot union into the incoherent clash
> Of our loose atoms, crystallizing them

[1] Exodus xxxiv. 29.

Around a single will's unpliant stem,
And making purpose of emotion rash."[1]

Add to the glory of Washington the fact that Moses' rod had no historic precedent, that yet it transformed into a new nationality a mighty mass of slaves, and "around that single will's unpliant stem" gathered from a host of wanderers a commonwealth whose law and religion were one, and something of this personal force in the history of human society is understood. The farewell address of Washington has but a more local application to the world of to-day; for the nations of earth read those last words of the great leader of Israel, and feel a certainty of government in God, as this statesman ascends Nebo, saying, "*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*" The solution of problems, which, on superficial inquiry, must seem to have been beyond the reach of his influence, is seen to lie close to the idea with which he

[1] "Under the Great Elm."

forsook an Egyptian court, and to have its root in that conception of the government of God which sustained his soul in the moment when Israel was in mutiny. The word of his time was *law;* the word of ours is *liberty;* but as the self-governing soul manifests its half-understood freedom in the flush of ardent youth, it finds no liberty which does not fulfill law, and none valuable which will not submit to its regulation. A deep Christian philosophy, instead of deposing this mighty Jew and tearing his achievements from its sacred books, recognizes the providence of history, first at Sinai, and then at Calvary; and assures the mind that there can be but a partial understanding of the new song of the redeemed without some knowledge of the song of Miriam at the seaside. So identical are the meeting-points of the forces of human redemption that, from the Isle of Patmos, one who was gifted with the inclusive vision of a seer saw the inhabitants of heaven singing "*the song of Moses and the Lamb.*"

Living yet amid the regnant influences of progress, it is significant that George Eliot, the poetess of much that makes our time too halting and infirm to follow his steps, should see the meanings that start from the grave of Moses.

"But Israel waited, looking toward the Mount,
Till with the deepening eve the elders came,
Saying: 'His burial is hid with God:
We stood far off and saw the Angels lift
His corpse aloft until they seemed a star
That burnt itself away within the sky.'
The people answered with mute orphaned gaze,
Looking for what had vanished evermore.
Then through the gloom without them and within
The spirits shaping light, mysterious speech,
Invisible Will wrought clear in sculptured sound,
The thought-begotten daughter of the voice
Thrilled on their listening sense: 'He has no tomb.
He dwells not with you dead, but lives as Law.'"[1]

Such words are but the testimony of the modern spirit to the truth that Moses stands, in the annals of men, not only for that code of Sinai, but that, in his career and in his attitude toward the destinies of

[1] "The Death of Moses," *Poetical Works*, p. 261.

mankind, there were gathered up the scattered meanings of this "Invisible Will" as it moves in the Universe, and that there came from out the fire of his soul a conception of the nature and majesty of law which has shone through dolorous and lawless centuries into the age in which we live. He made the idea of law the possession of religion, and religion has invested this idea with her eternal sanctities.[1] He has associated law with the Supreme Power of the universe so vitally that the awful grandeur of Sinai and the no less impressive sublimity of his silent guardianship seem but natural in the career of a soul whose privilege it was to entertain so important a message. "He endured," says Paul, "as seeing Him who is invisible."[2] Law was the avenue along which traveled the swift feet of the Infinite Will; and although having but an incomplete vision of a single route along which the Infinite swept —

[1] Michaelis, *Laws of Moses*, vol. i. p. 66.

[2] Hebrews xi. 27.

the law of conduct — he had such an insight into that, that congenial minds have been led into a more easy discovery of those highways, parting here and meeting there, by which Omnipotence reaches every point in the universe. Moses stands for all these laws, since they all meet and cross in the realm of conduct, whose lawgiver he was. All roads ran to Rome, and all laws run into the life of man, —

> "Since God collected and resumed in man
> The firmaments, the strata and the lights,
> Fish, fowl and beast, and insect — all their trains
> Of various life caught back upon His arm
> Reorganized and constituted Man
> The Microcosm, the adding up of works." [1]

"*Microcosm*" that Man is, he repeats the history of the universe. He has the experience of unconscious ages in a thought. He has to do with the laws of the life below him; for the visible universe hides its problem in his skull, and thither the laws tend, meeting in the law of his life.[2]

[1] Mrs. Browning.

[2] Vancotta, *The Development-Law of the Earth. The*

When St. Paul says, of the law of Moses, "*the law was our schoolmaster*,"[1] he states what is true of all law. Its work is the work of education. Man is created for a self-determining life, and the worth of law is that it puts man beyond itself, by making him fit for self-determination.[2] The laws of nature not only hold the visible universe in orderly unity, but are the perpetual revelation, to a docile mind, of the character and method of the supreme Power. The laws of human history are a ceaseless school, and offer a culture wide as man's life. The laws of God everywhere are loaded with benefit, which enters into personality by obedience. If they accomplish their full end, their personality becomes so strong that obedience is forgotten in the free alliance of the nature with the power behind the law, whose method of action it is. Mosaism is an illustration of

Supernatural in Nature, p. 184. Haeckel, *The History of Creation.*

[1] Galatians iii. 24, 25.

[2] Macgregor on Galatians, *in loc.*

this educative influence in law.[1] In the assertion that this is the real aim of law can be seen both the power and incompleteness of the law of Israel.[2] It needs not that any exhaustive list of texts be offered that we may see how plainly these are set forth in the early writings of Christianity. In heathenism itself, it has been found that law alone could not comprehend the life of man. The broken law and the law-breaker — these have been problems which the existence and power of law alone could not handle.[3] When the law has been broken, and the personality it was meant to serve has become disobedient, it has no power to make the weakness of disobedience over into the power to obey, nor to kindle a love of obedience. The

[1] Russell Martineau, *The Roots of Christianity in Mosaism.* Luckock, *The Tables of Stone*, p. 43.

[2] Leathes, *Foundations of Morality*, p. 16. Smith, *Characteristics of Christian Morality*, p. 29.

[3] Cocker, *Christianity and Greek Philosophy.* Leathes, *The Religion of Christ*, Lecture I. Martensen, *Christian Ethics*, vol. i. sec. 8.

law of Moses was "*added because of transgressions.*"[1] It could restrain evil; it could not help up the evil-doer who had fallen. It was a power to save, when obeyed, and even then its end was to be outgrown by the personality which it built up. "*The law was a schoolmaster,*" says Paul, "*to bring us to Christ.*"[2] What a scholarship it gave to the world! All that can ever follow will not make *obedience* less fundamental to the development of character; and this was its earliest gift to the race. Those precepts could not but put the mind of men in the attitude for principles; those services of the temple and that careful performance of small and incomplete duties were an education which the world was not to forget. But it would be a wasted culture without Christ. Its value lies in the fact that it brought the world to "*Christ that we might be justified by faith.*" Then it ends: "*After that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*"

[1] Galatians iii. 17; Joshua xv. 22.

[2] Galatians iii. 24, 25.

The appearance of the great lawgiver in the glory of Christ's transfiguration has, then, this significance, — the law has brought the world to Christ. In the glory of Christ, Moses had a right to stand. It has also the significance that Moses as the giver of the law has yielded now to this new lawgiver, Jesus, the Christ of God. It was not Christ standing in the neighborhood of the glory of Moses, but Moses standing in the presence of the transfigured Christ. Jesus left the words "*I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill*" [1] as the estimate, by the Christ, of these laws; and in His treatment of Mosaic legislation, as we shall see, He gave to Moses an indefeasible right to be the heavenly companion of His transfigured hour. But, also, Jesus made plain the fact that the era of law, as the supreme element in man's progress, was done, and that henceforth the law of liberty and the law of love should rule the souls of men. These two facts will appear, as

[1] Matthew v. 17.

we note the fundamental difference in the revelations through Moses and Jesus Christ.

In Moses, man has a revelation of the method of God ; in Jesus Christ a revelation of the nature — a manifestation of the very self — of God. The nature of Moses could come only so near to God as to find His method ; the nature of Jesus Christ was so divine as to reveal Him — the Nazarene was "*the express image of His person.*" [1] Thus, the proclamation of the lips and life of Moses is : "*God is Law ;*" the revelation of Jesus Christ is : "*God is Love.*" [2] Law is the method of love. The laws of nature and of the soul are the methods of operation which Love, by its inherent orderliness, uses to unify existence and to save the universe from ill-fated and destructive chaos, unto a constructive and beneficent cosmos, and to realize at last in conscious completeness its self in the destiny of man. Robert Browning has

[1] Hebrews i. 3; 1 Corinthians iv. 4; Colossians i. 15.
[2] 1 John iv. 8.

seen deeply into the somewhat indivisible alliance of essence and method in God and in His revelation in nature: —

> "I spoke as I saw.
> I report, as man may of God's work — *all 's Love, yet all 's Law.*
> Now I lay down the judgeship He sent me. Each faculty tasked,
> To perceive Him, has gained an abyss where a dewdrop was asked."

And nothing more certainly indicates the intelligent hold which this seer has on the truth as it is in Jesus than the influence which this profound conception has with him, in the domain of ethics. It is true that, in God's nature and His revelation in history, the method of God is so allied and contemporaneous with His essence that all not only seems but is both Love and Law. And it is certain that Love is the essential element of which Law is the method. The duty of the human soul is to be unsatisfied with enforced or unintelligent obedience of Law, and to rest not until it enters into the very life of the personal Force behind,

and in all law. Thus shall it find in God rootage for its own true and real life, so that afterward its own being shall feed upon a deeper life, paternal and everlasting. Then, from within every chamber of its inmost being, the energy of that soul shall go out sympathetically and harmoniously with these laws. No longer are they restraining powers, but a part of its own natural method of existence, because of its affectionate alliance with the Love of which they are the order. To do this is not only a duty, but man's privilege through the Incarnation of God in Christ. God *is* Love. In Jesus of Nazareth, Love is so human that it charms and commands the remnant of the divine within us — our love. "*And I*," said the Christ, "*if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*"[1] By the acceptance of Christ, we do accept God; and by the might of Christ's influence, we find ourselves "*hid with Christ in God.*"[2] Thus, out of the divine nature, in which

[1] John xii. 32. [2] Colossians iii. 3.

the soul is rooted, in Christ, does its *law of love* come.[1] Christ is a law unto Himself, because He, with the Father, is Love; and Love is its own law. In Him the soul falls in love with Love, and thus finds its true self; and it finds also that it is a law unto itself, since Love has assumed the throne. God-like it is for the first time, for it is self-centred; manly for the first time, since it feels that it was made for this. The schoolmaster's work is done. It has come to Christ. Law is lost in Love.

And yet, as always in Christ's transfigured hours, Moses is present. In the light of this experience, it can understand him. Moses is fulfilled in Christ, because not only does the soul feel the *law of love*, but, for the first time, it feels the *love of law.*

"Life, with all it yields of joy and woe
And hope and fear, — believe the aged friend, —
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is;

[1] 2 Corinthians v. 14; Romans xiii. 10; Galatians v. 13; 1 John iii. 1; iv. 7; viii. 16; Ephesians v. 2; John xiii. 34.

> And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
> Such prize, despite the envy of the world,
> And having gained truth keep truth ; that is all." [1]

But into the midst of this "chance o' the prize of learning love," by the slow wanderings in life's desert, even under the command of Moses, Christ comes ; and God, who in Moses educates men by the revelation of His method, now, through the Incarnation, offers Himself. The days of tedious "learning" are omitted, in one touch of the eternal Christ. So that the entire gift of Christianity to man is Christ. Love is lovable, in this most lovely manifestation of its very self. The soul does not resist its appeal to the power of love that it has. Jesus is the appeal of God's nature to the God-like within us. In the loving brother, the fatherhood of God so persuades the latent sonship of the human soul into utterance, that we are no longer creatures, but sons, and cry : "*Abba, Father.*" [2]

[1] Browning, *A Death in the Desert.*

[2] John v. 17 ; Acts i. 4 ; John xiv. 20 ; Matt. xxiii. 9 ; John xx. 7 ; Mark xiv. 36.

Christianity is as eternal as the soul. It is the love of Love. Every element of life that lifts the soul to that self-centred life, it takes up and fulfills. All morality is thus more than "touched with emotion;" it is transformed; and, in hours when Jesus is transfigured in some human soul, it comes from its home, and, like Moses, is seen in the light of something far more divine, which is its fulfillment.

> "They talk of morals, O thou bleeding Lamb!
> The true morality is love of Thee."

As Love, in the Incarnation, did complete Law, and in the nature of God must ever give it its fullness, so in the real life of a man, the life in which he partakes of God in Christ, "*love*," and love alone, "*is the fulfilling of the law*." [1] The power returns, at last, to its Source. Christ breaks down the legalism of the soul, by the development within it of the affectionate alliance which in all high moments every good man feels with the divine order.

[1] Romans xiii. 10.

"The very God! think, Abib, dost thou think?
So the All-Great were the All-Loving too;
So through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
Face my hands fashioned, see it in Myself;
Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of Mine,
But Love I gave thee, with Myself to love,
And thou must love Me who have died for thee.'"[1]

And it is this law of love which is thus, because in his essential nature man is a child of God, the law of liberty,[2] to every soul which has found its sonship unto the Father, in our elder brother, Jesus the Christ. In Christ Jesus, not only do the affections throb in sympathy with law as seen in Love's manifestation, but the will, in that sublime instant of experience, becomes, for the first time, self-determining in the life, because it allies itself with the will of heaven, and its empire is as sure as that of God. It wields the omnipotency of Love by the fact that having willingly submitted to Love, the method of Love is

[1] Browning, vol. iii. p. 226.

[2] James i. 25; ii. 12.

its method. This method is its law.[1] It is not a law of restraint any more. As the law of love insures the love of law, so, and for the same reason, the law of liberty insures the liberty of law. "*Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;*"[2] and there is also law. Moses is fulfilled in Christ. And, as in this light of transfiguration we note the appearance of the great lawgiver, we must be impressed with the deep alliance, which our age seems not to have felt, of that real freedom, after which all else is vague yearning, with the government of God.

Never does the government of the Almighty seem to disclose its throne so nearly as when, in Jesus Christ, Law recedes into Love. Christ Himself, in the moment of this revelation, is a sacrifice. For the lawlessness of earth, He substitutes the infi-

[1] Wütke, *Christian Ethics*, Lacroix's Translation, vol. i. p. 241.

[2] 2 Corinthians iii. 17; Romans viii. 21; Galatians v. 1.

nite Love behind and within all law. In Love's wounded side, the law is made intact. But there is something else to do. To stop there would be to leave the world with Moses. In this very act, Love so reveals His loveliness, and hence the loveliness of law, that the still living embers of the God-like in a sinful soul — the powers of love beneath all the hate of sin — are so inspired that they glow, and, delivered from the love of sin, as well as from its guilt, it sees and feels itself saved to God in Christ, — saved, with an honored law, to Love, by love.

So "*there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" [1] Moses appeared at the transfiguration of Christ, because "*the law was our schoolmaster.*" He disappeared, because it had brought us "*to Christ.*" How clearly did Paul understand this! The

[1] Romans viii. 1.

record of the old was sacred to him. "*And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him.*"[1] The record of the new was still more sacred; its story of transfiguration yet more sublime. "*But,*" says Paul, "*if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious.*"[2]

The heavenly visitant was not silent. With Elias, he conversed with the transfigured Christ. The theme of their conversation was "*the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.*" Fifteen centuries of celestial life had revealed to the

[1] Exodus xxxiv. 29.

[2] 2 Corinthians iii. 7, 8.

old lawgiver a significant event lying in the path of this new lawgiver, the Christ, of whom Moses was a prophet, which he had not seen on earth.[1] Standing for the majesty of law, and insisting upon obedience, Moses had seen the law broken, and was not unconscious of the ruin it wrought in the disobedient nature. There came into existence a temple service in the tabernacle and a series of sacrifices, which, as many another unspoken movement of the deeper consciousness of man, pointed to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.[2] The serpent was lifted up in the wilderness.[3] The interest with which the leader of the exodus had watched the beneficent influence of these and felt their insufficiency in a soul which confessed it in prophecy, had grown, as, near the Throne of God he had, for these

[1] Delitzsch, *Old Testament History of Redemption*, p. 71.

[2] Liddon, *The Divinity of Christ*, p. 103.

[3] Exodus xxvi.; Hebrews ix. 10.

fifteen hundred years, found a point of view from which he saw the concerns of man. This heavenly life could not have lessened his sense of the majesty of law. He must have held to the great idea which he gave to mankind, with a firmer hand, as he learned that its source was Love. It must have seemed a more terrible thing that any man should ever have broken it. His system of sacrifices — how little could it do. Nothing but Love's own sacrifice could answer; and when, in glory ineffable, Moses stood with the Christ, the truth of Sinai grasped the fact of Calvary, and the voice that gave the law spoke of "*the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.*" [1]

It was a moment in Christ's life and in the spiritual culture of those disciples when that shadow had grown intense as midnight. If never before, Moses had given them all to know that the skies were bending with a mighty interest over

[1] Numbers xxi. 8; John iii. 14.

this long tragedy, and that the zenith was over Golgotha. The great central fact of earth's history was also the great central fact of the happiness of heaven, — the death of Jesus of Nazareth. To the broken-hearted Christ, what a ministration of power! Earth with its noise and empire of evil might forget the lonely Galilean peasant who had "not where to lay His head," but heaven's most illustrious citizen would speak to Him of the quenchless interest of the skies. Jews whom he came to save, the nation whose only real patriot He was, might scorn to mention a scene which should bring into itself the odium of centuries, and a mode of death which would exile His name from the lips of men; even His disciples might push away from their vision the horrible fancy of an outlaw's death for Him, but Moses, the most colossal figure of their history, their statesman and God's friend, had come in that hour, with the flash of the throne yet in his eye and the life of eternity in

his voice, to speak with Him, not concerning the brilliancy of His transfigured face, or even of the raptures of the blest, but only of that topic so carefully avoided, — "*the decease He should accomplish at Jerusalem.*"

Here, then, does Moses confess that the law of all other laws is that of self-sacrifice. It is the law of all other laws, because it is the law of Love, whose method all law is. Moses, looking from a heavenly point of view, sees in this moment of glory a moment to come which Heaven will recognize as having a far deeper glory. It is that which seems darkest to those disciples, for they look from an earthly point of view. Moses and the Christ speak of this hour to come as the time when something should occur which, even to Him, would be an achievement. They speak about "*the decease* (or the departure) *which* he should *accomplish*[1] at

[1] "The decease which He was about to accomplish denotes, not the finishing of life by dying (Bleek), but

Jerusalem." Afterwards, when Jesus stood alone with the world, He saw the same glory of Calvary. "*The hour is come*," said He, "*when the Son of man should be glorified.*"[1] Still, the greatest assertion is that of His whole career as to the authority of this law of self-sacrifice. In the consciousness of power, which Satan confessed,[2] He chose weakness in life, and confronted death, saying: "*No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.*"[3] Whatever truth has been spoken in this lecture is summed up in this law of self-sacrifice. It is the law of love. In Christ, as the manifestation of Love, it was the law of liberty. This law of love in operation will make us followers of Him, and give unto us the same liberty of law, making each so truly a law unto him-

the completion of death itself." Godet, *St. Luke*, vol. i. p. 428. Cf. Milligan, *The Resurrection of Our Lord*, p. 120. 1 Thessalonians v. 9, 10; John vi. 54, 60.

[1] John xii. 23. [2] Luke iv. 10, 11.

[3] John x. 17, 18.

self that no man taketh his life from him, but he lays it down of himself. To that soul Christ has come, not only to fulfill the past, but, by His decease which He did "*accomplish*" at Jerusalem, to "*reconcile*" it "*unto God by His death*" that it may be "*saved by His life.*"[1] In His self-sacrifice, we begin our own. The one "made perfect through suffering" is "the Captain of our salvation."

"Strong in Thy strength, though in myself but weakness,
Equal to all I know that I shall be,
If I can seize the mantle of Thy meekness
And wrap it close around my soul like Thee."

[1] Romans v. 10; 2 Corinthians v. 18, 19.

LECTURE VI.

The Appearance of Elias.

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"And behold there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with Him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass, as they departed from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: let us build three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud: saying, This is my beloved Son, hear Him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone." — LUKE ix. 30–36.

AS the waters of the Red Sea divided themselves at the stroke of the rod of Moses, so the brown current of the Jordan was broken at the touch of the folded sheepskin of Elijah. "The law and the prophets" are not the names of two great movements, having their sources at different fountains and

moving through different realms of the human soul, but they denote one mighty current flowing from one divine wisdom and providence, and touching banks which are covered with forms of life different only by the latitudes through which it makes its course. It is not strange that, at such evident points of contact, these souls, Moses and Elias, should be united. A pure theism and its harvest of truth and hope for mankind — for these, stood these two monarchs of the past. From this theism, "the law and the prophets" inevitably came. If God was, He ruled; this was at the basis of the "*law*." If God was, man's truest visions of himself, and of that which should enable him to realize them, had their foundation in His very character; and this made "prophecy." It is impossible to take into the mind the one, without receiving with like hospitality the other. As our recent thinking puts itself into that age, and accepts Moses, it finds how naturally, out of laws and pur-

poses of which man is there made conscious, there grows a hope for the future, which, uniting itself with the Messianic idea, should go out into all the manifold spiritual consciousness of Israel, modifying institutions, antagonizing heathenism, unifying the people with a hope which should always lead, because it could never be outgrown. All this repeats itself in the human soul. Once let a man adopt as a code of life the deliverances of Sinai, and the soul becomes its own prophet. It invests itself with a prophetic enthusiasm, and is borne along into new conflicts with surrounding evil, as a veritable Elijah. That natural Messianic hope, which every child of Adam has, which he recognizes, even if he says nothing but "It will be better some day," grows more into the certainty that somewhere and somehow he will be the man he was destined to be, and unites to itself every truth and fact that may be assimilated into its life; and thus Sinai is followed by Carmel.

Indeed, in Moses himself did the prophet seem to rise out of the lawgiver. He was so true to the government of the present hour that he reached forward into the civilization of the future. When Aaron and Miriam said: "*Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not spoken also by us?*"[1] they obtained information from God that He was speaking through the lawgiver, in a peculiar manner.[2] Out from the nature of that law there came to Moses not only the revelation of the duty of the king of that land to which they were being led,[3] but there came also a larger vision to which he was true. "*The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken.*"[4] So Moses, yet glowing with the manifested glory of God on the Mount, possessed the character of a peerless prophet.

[1] Num. xii. 2.
[2] Verse 8.
[3] Deut. xvii. 14.
[4] Deut. xviii. 15–22.

"*And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.*" [1] In the glory which came to him on the summit of Sinai, there was a suggestiveness which carried the augury of a full revelation. Moses believed in God, after a manner that much of our superficial theism cannot understand. He felt that the future, as the present of humanity, was rooted in the nature of God. He could give mankind, as he touched it in the life of Israel, the vision of no greater fact than this: "*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*" [2] Was that which transfigured his face to lie hidden forever from men, or be only thus partially revealed? Nay, it would open its whole treasure to One, who, by nature and holiness, would rise into sovereignty over the guardian law which held it. In the solitary experience of Moses, there was a disclosure of what lay in God and

[1] Deuteronomy xxxiv. 10.

[2] Deuteronomy xxxiii. 27.

what had for a moment touched a human face. Moses "*wist not that his face did shine;*" yet he was then a prophet of One who, fifteen centuries afterward, should so entertain that glory that it should attract him from the skies.

Many were the unnoticed facts which entered into the atmosphere of the pre-Christian consciousness. They did influence, in very evident ways, the fire which trembled so uncertainly in the mind of Israel; and it is impossible that, in Moses, pure theist that he was, the too brief vision [1] which he had of God should not have fed the flame of this vaguely expressed hope, which finally was realized in One, who, in his presence on Hermon, did prove Himself "*the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father,*" "*who,*" though "*no man hath seen God at any time,*" "*hath declared Him.*" [2] Another proof of this relationship lies in the fact that Malachi, ages after prophetism

[1] Exodus xxxiii. 20. [2] John i. 18.

had grown out of the law, speaks of the second Elijah, — John the Baptist, — who should precede the Messiah in the day of Jehovah, and makes one past whose chief figures are Moses and Elias.[1] Everywhere does Christ Himself recognize the prophet in the lawgiver, and the unity of Moses and Elias. "*If ye had believed Moses ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me.*"[2] He will not break the bond; He says, "*The law and the prophets were until John.*"[3] All real prophecy was along the lines of law. Its vision-point is the theistic idea of a *divine order.* This is such a height, that from it prophecy looks over ages. All real law is prophetic. It is educating a personal life, which shall be free from its presence. Its birth-place is the theistic idea of *man made in the image of God.* This is such a goal that toward it all its powers tend. When He gives His commandment, we are told that "*on these*

[1] Malachi iv. 4, 5.

[2] John v. 46.

[3] Matthew xxii. 40; vii. 12.

hang the law and the prophets." Christ saw Himself as the conclusion of the soul's mighty argument as disclosed in history. Assuming the premises of Mosaism, the logic leads through prophetism, and so truly ends in Christ that He could say, "*Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.*"[1] Thus, in an unsuspected way, was the Christ's native sense of eternity ministered unto, as in the distance between Moses and Elias He saw the interval of centuries, and yet felt in Himself the consummation of that process of redemption which made the world's history a single event.

So profound is the relationship which binds law and prophecy, that their representatives, Moses and Elias, not only appear together in the hour of Christ's visible glory, but just as, the law being taken up into love in Christ, and having brought the world to a new lawgiver, Moses dis-

[1] John v. 45.

appeared, so also did Elias, the prophecies of the past being realized in a fact which was the Christ, who was Himself the new prophet. As together they came, drawn by the powers which make history, to the scene of Hermon, so together they quit the spot, where, as they departed, it was proposed that this peerlessness of the Christ, which they came to confess, should be lost sight of. These facts will appear, as we note the fulfillment of prophecy in Christ Jesus.

Just as in the quality of the mind of Moses there was that which made him the fit representative of all law, so there is that in the attitude of Elijah, rude and wild, yet reverent and awed at the mouth of the cave, the avenger and the seer, killing the enemy, and at last leaving his mantle with one who should carry the soul of man nearer to the reign of gentleness and the era of love,[1] which makes him gather into his voice the

[1] 2 Kings ii.

thousand unspoken prophecies of nature and the soul, and makes him speak more truly than uninspired lips could speak the half-expressed visions which have floated before the loftiest minds of other nations. Elijah was the personal force which carried the impulse of the human soul in Israel over an abyss,[1] and, in Elisha, connected it with a life which could not be silent, until it was preëminent in civilizing power. The prophets are the saviours of the times in which they live, by giving the disconnected years a sense of that eternity which no more surely predicates a past than a future. In them, for a moment, the *Zeitgeist* yields to the *Ewigkeits-Geist;* and, in a way to which Matthew Arnold seems blind, the *Aberglaube*[2] is the realest literature of the soul. Every man who has lived has been a prophet of the Christ. At

[1] Delitzsch, *Messianic Prophecies*, p. 56; Ewald, *History*, vol. i. p. 563.

[2] M. Arnold, *Literature and Dogma*, p. 148; *God and the Bible*, p. 157.

his best hours, he has at least dimly felt the essential relationship he had in himself unto the Supreme. A sense of sin,[1] which has spoken in all literature, has been the confession he made of a need which grew vocal, as it became too strong for his myths, and at last confessed decisively that Pan was dead. That sense of sin has not been satisfied with its own sacrifices. It has looked through them all and dimly seen the Sinless One. "If," said Horace, "a guiltless hand hath touched the altar, it is as potent to soothe the averted Penates with a handful of meal and salt, as with the costliest victim." [2] Virgil's fourth eclogue becomes comparable to Isaiah,[3] and Lucretius speaks these words, —

"Nec pietas ullast velatum saepe videri
Vertier ad lapidem atque omnis accedere ad aras,

[1] Ullmann, *The Sinlessness of Jesus*, chaps. i., ii., iii.; Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i. p. 70; Kalisch, *Leviticus, Essay on Sacrifice.*

[2] Abbott, *Through Nature to Christ*, pp. 126, 127.

[3] James F. Clarke, *Events and Epochs of Religious History*, p. 284.

Nec procumbere humi prostratum et pandere palmas
Ante deum delubra, nec aras sanguine multo
Spargere quadrupedum, nec votis nectere vota,
Sed mage pacata posse omnia mente tueri." [1]

The greatest souls have so confessed this sense of sin and this necessity for sacrifice that, to an age which listens intently to the past, the anxious outlooking of pre-Christian thought, in a trust vague and yet profound, seems in itself a prophecy most impressive. But this is a single line along which the human soul in heathenism sent its eye. Every idol it has made, from the most disgusting to a colossal Jove, has told of a yearning for an incarnate God ; and every Buddha, princely, solitary, sad soul, who seeks in vain to solve life's complex problem, testifies of Him who, King of Heaven, leaves a throne eternal to be alone and sorrow-stricken, but to solve that same problem, pointing at last to the life immortal, as Buddha pointed to the extinction of life, to Nirwana. The

[1] Sellar, *Roman Poets of the Republic*, p. 357.

Brahmin, unsatisfied with Vishnu's incarnation, and even with the Krishna of the Bhágavad Gità, who yet holds to it as his all, is a prophet of that long company which "hath been since the world began." God hath not left Himself without a witness anywhere; and, unconsciously, every man has his expectant and yearning self represented in that conscious vision which made the transfiguration of Christ so glad an hour to Elijah. This man stands unsatisfied, yet hopeful, in the midst of a nation, either satisfied or hopeless, and thus is the type of the prophets of God and man.

All the prophecies of the human soul have their best statement and acquire the vision of inspiration in the prophecy of Israel. By its fulfillment in Jesus, every Elijah is present, and, in the hour of the Christ's transfiguration, he yields up his office.

In his masterly way, Delitzsch has justly indicated a single phase of the prophecy

of the Christ which was latent in the chaos at the beginning.[1] Obviously, however, the earliest prophecy of Christ is the character of God. Believing in Him, man believes in himself. A pure theism makes a race of prophets. Love must reveal Himself, and, if sin come between Him and His child, He must reveal Himself as a Redeemer. God, as the prophet of Himself Incarnate, was the Word, and that was realized in Christ; so that when John begins the new Genesis, he is more profound than the author of the old, and says, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.*"[2] Creation must hold the prophecy which was in the Word from the beginning, because it was made "*through Him.*" So that the "*groaning creation*"[3] was the second prophet. If, in the next instant of its existence after its beginning, it had not "*travailed*" and thus moved toward a goal; if it had begun immediately

[1] *Old Testament History of Redemption*, p. 11.

[2] John i. 1. [3] Romans viii. 22.

to disintegrate and degenerate; if it had even simply stood still, there would have been no prophecy in it. But when the "*travail*" began; when the long pain of its progress, of which the Bible and science speak, first throbbed, then it uttered prophecy. The unincarnate Word pulsed in its "*groan and travail*," as in that life of the Spirit by whom Christ cometh again, in which we "*have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*"[1] Nature's story of woe is our own. Microcosm that this body is, it carries in its pain, and into the soul's yearning, the prophecy of the Christ, — the expectation of the Reason, *Logos*, — which, because it was the reason for creation satisfactory to God in the beginning, shall be a satisfactory reason to us for our created selves. So man, as both a child of God and of created nature, the two earliest prophets, is the third prophet

[1] Romans viii. 23.

of the Christ. The word spoken to Adam after his sin, "*Where art thou?*"[1] is God's first intimation that He seeks man. It was the oldest announcement of the fact of which He spoke, when He said, "*I have loved thee with an everlasting love.*" It was, as Delitzsch suggests, "designed to bring man to Himself." But it was more: it is the assertion of the nature of Love to seek and find the sinner, who was hiding in fear and shame. It shows how God's own nature, as Love, was the deep prophecy of His coming after the sin-cursed race, in Christ; and, at the transfiguration, Elijah's appearance and departure told how truly this prophecy was fulfilled, in One who so really incarnated God that men saw the profound fact: "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and*" — is there not a fine logic here? — "*sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*" "*We love Him, because He first loved us.*"[2]

[1] Genesis iii. 9. [2] John iv. 10, 19.

From this infinite Love came the word of prophecy that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman,*" said God to the serpent, "*and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,*" [1] — a prophecy which had been partially fulfilled in Him who had already begun to spoil "*principalities and powers,*" [2] to whom in those hours Elias was speaking, of the death through which "*He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil;*" and in whom it should have complete fulfillment when in men, through Him, "*the God of peace should bruise Satan under their feet shortly.*" [3]

Out of this infinite Love sprung the bow in the cloud, — a prophecy strengthening all others,[4] for it was God's declaration of eternal trustworthiness. On Him, it sig-

[1] Genesis iii. 15.
[2] Colossians ii. 15.
[3] Romans xvi. 20.
[4] Genesis ix. 14, 15, 16.

nified, man might rely; and the Messianic idea ever after stood more firm because of the seven-colored announcement that in all this mingling of sun and storm there was a faithful God looking through every drop. Elijah stood in the very presence of that Sun of righteousness as He flashed out His latent glory on Hermon. The bow was gone, for the air was clear of storm. Once more to the race's childhood must God speak; and to Abraham there come the words: "*And in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*," [1] — words whose fulfillment is transfigured before him in that glorious One, whose Majesty David sees, when he says, "*Men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed;*" [2] whose power goes into the eloquence of Peter; and whose unique position in history, as Jesus of Nazareth, inspires the teaching and career of St. Paul.[3] As Elias, this prophet of a later age, saw how, in his own

[1] Genesis xii. 3. [2] Psalms lxxii. 17.

[3] Romans iv. 16; Galatians iii. 16; Acts iii. 35.

words, there were taken up all the lofty meanings which these words had, when spoken three times, — once to Abraham, once to Isaac, and once to Jacob, — the glory of transfiguration grew more intense. He was in the presence of the One who had thus made a unit of history. Already had this fact, moving so triumphantly through the eras of Israelitish life, been the source of the national spirit. Now, Christ was founding a nationality of redeemed souls which should include past and future, and thus was continuing in Himself with a divine power the prophetic benedictions which fell from the lips of dying patriarchs. In Him, even the past must have grown brighter, and, as Elias was seen only in the light of Christ's transfiguration by the disciples, so the deep words of ancient days were fully understood for the first time. Jacob had pointed out the tribe of Judah as the royal tribe, in a way that did not portray to the consciousness of Israel the features of the Christ, but here Elias saw what it

all meant. "*Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.*" [1] Elias must have remembered how that name *Shiloh* stood out in Israelitish history. There the tribe of Judah had assembled, in fulfillment of this prophecy, having received its possession in Gilgal; and, when the tabernacle of the covenant was pitched there, the victory was sure and the land was theirs.[2] He must have known, also, how royal above the rest

[1] Gen. xlix. 8–12. [2] Josh. xviii. 1; Num. xxiv. 17.

had been the tribe of Judah in the wars of the judges [1] and under the leadership of David [2] and Solomon,[3] and how Moses had blessed him.[4] History was eloquent then, as he read the prophecy in its fulfillment there on Hermon, for he stood in the presence of One "*who sprang out of Judah,*" [5] yea, of the "*Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,*" who was then "*prevailing to open the book and to unloose the seven seals thereof.*" [6]

Elijah was seeing the triumph of the soul which was his companion on that earthly visit, and even then stood by him, — Moses. With him, he now saw the meaning of the exodus, the passover lamb, and read in the shining face of Christ the unwritten harmony of the song of Moses and that of the Lamb.[7] The mediatorship of

[1] Judges i. 2; xx. 18.

[2] 2 Samuel ii. 4; Psalm xviii. 40.

[3] 1 Kings xii.; 2 Chronicles x. 11.

[4] Deuteronomy xxxiii. 7. [5] Hebrews vii. 14.

[6] Revelation v. 5.

[7] Deuteronomy v. 23–25; Exodus xx. 19; Hebrews viii. 6.

Moses was now lost in that of Christ, which fulfilled it.[1] The elder prophet and lawgiver was seen only in the light of this prophet which at last had come.[2]

"If," says Professor Leathes, "the consciousness of Abraham was that his seed should be the blessing of the world, the consciousness of Moses was that his prophetic office should give place to Another;"[3] and he so awards Samuel the place of the first of the prophets, after Moses, as to leave out of its full connection a prophetic hour for which, on the mount of Christ's glory, Elias must have stood. Delitzsch, among others, seems to see "the image of the future One as it took on the form of a King," in the words of Balaam;[4] and recent scholarship will agree that this world-blessing had its threefold announcement, as seed, prophet, and king, when Balaam said: "*I*

[1] Deuteronomy v. 23–25; Exodus xx. 19; Hebrews viii. 6.

[2] Acts iii. 22–24; Acts vii. 37; John vii. 40.

[3] *The Religion of the Christ*, p. 52.

[4] *Messianic Prophecies*, p. 40.

shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."[1] For that trumpet-tone stood Elias, when he looked at Jesus in that glory of which John was a beholder, — John who should afterward see this Star from Patmos and hear Him say, "*I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star,*"[2] and see "*on His vesture and thigh a name written,* KING OF KINGS."[3] It is indicative of the essential melody, which, in different natures and at various times, manifested itself in these prophecies, that Elias stood not more for the maternal Hannah, singing, "*The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them; the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the horn of His Anointed,*"[4] than for the unknown One, who, seeing another side of life's

[1] Numbers xxiv. 17.
[2] Revelation xxii. 16.
[3] Revelation xix. 16.
[4] 1 Samuel ii. 10.

problem in the sins of Eli's sons, looked into the same future, and with a vision which entered into the very counsel of God, proclaimed: "*And I will raise Me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is within my heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before Mine Anointed for ever.*" [1] Elias saw all this fulfilled in the broken empires, across which the Messiah had come with unseen feet, and in that priesthood, greater than that of Eli, who was the descendant of Aaron, which is "*not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.*" [2]

It is the remark of the penetrative Horsley that "prediction in its highest form, the Messianic, is nowhere more perspicuous than in the Psalms." Certainly the expectation of the past, vague as it might have been, gained immensely in clearness and intensity as that spirit which took form in national songs made for itself

[1] 1 Samuel ii. 35. [2] Hebrews vii. 11–16.

the literature which we know as the Psalms. Whatever their dates, this collection of odes is the poetry of a peculiar people, whose whole history must have been made under the influence of a certain hope. Taking the successive forms of "the seed of Abraham," "the successor in prophecy to Moses," and "the ideal King," they mark the development of a harmony which was gathered into the melody of Elias's tones, as on that spot of Christ's transfiguration he felt the security of a yearning past in the grandeur of the present. Truly the words of the old national hymn, "*He hath not dealt so with any nation*," [1] must have seemed a commonplace announcement of the significance of a national history whose Christ was so glorious. All that David's lyre had yielded of the music of the future was more than taken up in "the satisfying symphonies" of this "*Son of David*," [2] from the current of whose life there went

[1] Psalm cxlvii. 20.

[2] Cf. Delitzsch, *Commentary on Psalms*, cx. 4.

intimations of a song eternal, the ode of a redeemed race. That fore-gleam of light which did break upon the Psalmist's soul when he said, "*The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*," [1] Elias now saw, in the orb from which it made its way through the centuries; for that transfigured One, Jesus, "*was made a surety of a better testament*," "*hath an unchangeable priesthood*," and is "*able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*" [2] In that same shining face, Elias saw the source of those rays of light, which had touched the darkest days of the past. The words of God, calling David, "*Arise, anoint him, for this is he*," [3] had now their full meaning to the ages, — a meaning which Newman, seeing Christ transfigured, has recognized in his verses concerning David: —

[1] Cf. Delitzsch, *Commentary on Psalms*, cx. 4.

[2] Hebrews vii. 22, 24, 25. [3] 2 Samuel ii. 4.

"Strange that guileless face and form
To lavish on the scarring storm!
Yet we take thee in thy blindness,
And we buffet thee in kindness;
Little chary of thy fame,—
Dust unborn may bless or blame,—
But we mould thee for the root
Of man's promised healing Fruit."

All that this troubled life had of prophecy was made real in the sorrow-stricken One,[1] whose face glowed with no glory which could keep Elias from speaking to Him of His death. Elias was true to facts lying as yet unseen when they stirred the souls of the national poets. Only in that glowing face could he see the power which would make true the words, "*For thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption;*"[2] for the transfiguration was so clearly the intimation of the resurrection, that Jesus, as we shall note, put the disciples off, until, in the triumph at Joseph's tomb, they could under-

[1] Perowne on Psalm xxxv. 27.

[2] Psalm xvi. 10.

stand Hermon's glory. Only there could be gained the significance of the words, "*Thou art fairer than the children of men; Thy throne is for ever and ever.*" On Hermon, the sweet note of the old song was made true: "*Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*" That Psalm, with whose martial strain Cromwell's host charged at the battle of Dunbar, with its words, "*Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them,*"[1] was fast becoming history, as Elias waited on Hermon, to converse with Jesus about Calvary. All these prophecies, however, made Elias not less interested to see, as he did, in speaking to Christ about His decease, the fulfillment of one prophecy in a lonely sufferer, crying, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*"[2] and, at last, of another, when "*the stone which the builders refused is be-*

[1] Psalm lxviii. 18. [2] Psalm xxii. 1.

come the head of the corner," [1] and David's joy should be complete in the saying of "*the Lord unto*" his "*Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.*" [2]

More still must this face have shone to the great prophet, as he stood with the memory of the words uttered so long ago by others of his companions in the heavens. Here he stood in the sound of His voice, whose speech had been uttered so inadequately by himself and the succeeding schools. Here was the morning Sun whose light had made the sky less dark and the times less dolorous, in which Elijah himself, Elisha, Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea carried the national expectation by lofty declaration, by a wise and tender leadership, by a quenchless hope, by a larger vision, by a typical life, by a sweet courage, or by the cry, "*Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn us, and He will heal us; He*

[1] Psalm cxviii. 22. [2] Psalm cx. 1.

hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us: on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him."[1]

Before him stood radiant the One of whom Isaiah had spoken. It was "the day" of which Isaiah had a sight, when he said, "*In that day shall the branch of Jehovah become an ornament and a glory.*"[2] There was the "*rod*" which had "*come forth out of the stem of Jesse,*" and "*the branch*" which should "*grow out of his roots.*"[3] "*The Gentiles*" had begun to "*seek,*" and "*His rest*" had already been "*glory.*"[4] "*A virgin*" had "*brought forth a son, Immanuel.*"[5] The very glory of heaven was then telling the saints of all ages, "*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.*" "*The government*" of the future was already "*upon His shoulders,*" and "redeemed" souls, "returning" and "coming" "*unto Zion with songs and ever-*

[1] Hosea vi. 1, 2. [2] Isaiah xxviii. 5. [3] Isaiah xi. 1.
[4] Verse 10. [5] Isaiah vii. 14.

lasting joy upon their heads," were "obtaining" "*joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing*" were fleeing "*away.*"[1] "*Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace,*"[2] — lips were already calling Him by these titles. Breaking no "*bruised reed,*" quenching no "*smoking flax,*" He was setting "*judgment in the earth;*"[3] and the rapturous words of Micah,[4] the statesman-like anticipation of Habakkuk,[5] the echoing language of Zephaniah,[6] the heaven-illumed but tearful vision of Jeremiah,[7] the fine mysticism of Ezekiel,[8] and the far-reaching hope of Daniel[9] were being rapidly fulfilled, alongside of the oracles of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. That dimly seen Fact which had moved through all the eras of their life was a Person; and Elias, coming with the light of the heavenly world in his eye, stood

[1] Isaiah xxxv. 10.
[2] Isaiah ix. 6.
[3] Isaiah xlii.
[4] Micah iv. 1; v. 2.
[5] Habakkuk ii. 4.
[6] Zephaniah iii. 10.
[7] Jeremiah xxiii. 5.
[8] Ezekiel xxxiv. 16, 23.
[9] Daniel ii. 44.

reverently in the glory of the transfiguration of Christ.

But with such a complete fulfillment he cannot yield even to the proposition of Peter ; and after the cloud and the voice Jesus is found alone. Just as Moses disappeared before the new Lawgiver, who came not to destroy but to fulfill, so did Elias quit the height of Hermon before the new prophet, who, while fulfilling the past, held the empire of the future. The transfigured One was the new prophet, whose forecast was inclusive of eternity, and whose transcendent point of view was the heart of God. The day of Elias was done, when at last to the soul of man, looking so long from all points on the circumference of being, there appeared a luminous centre, the Fact Jesus Christ. Just as human thought and desire have looked centrewards from the many outlying points and been at rest, so the centre, fixed in absolute love, has sent out, through radii of time which traverse eter-

nity and radii of space which traverse infinity, a life ever new and renewing, relating the universe of man and God in perennial hope. Jesus is not only the Christ of God unto man, but becomes also the Christ of man unto God. By realizing all the lofty dreams of the human soul as it yielded to the brooding love, He came into the realm of our visible life to be the perpetual source of fairer visions. In Him, the soul has an infinite future. Jesus of Nazareth is the prophet of human nature. Peter did not see all that this meant, at the moment of Christ's transfiguration. But afterwards it came to him through the swift-flying years. In that second letter, when he would leave the church some scene from his memory which gathered into its significance the meanings of this holy religion, his feet are again on Hermon ; his eye is once more fixed upon the glowing face of the Christ. "*Moreover,*" he says, "*I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these*

things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitness of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount." And what is the truth which came with all this glory? This it is, which Peter rushes on to speak, "*We have a more sure word of prophecy.*"[1] That more sure word is the historic Christ.

The more profoundly we study Christianity and the soul of man, the more surely we see the force of the prophetic element in Jesus of Nazareth. Whenever a human soul begins to yield to His influence, there is felt the spell of prophecy. The first step is to open the hitherto

[1] 2 Peter i. 19.

closed gates of an infinite future, when the Saviour is admitted. A soul asks the way to God in Christ; and the asking comes in a simple plea to be shown the way of salvation. There is only one word to speak, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*" When, in howsoever small measure, it does believe on Him, it takes to its native eternity as a bird to the air of heaven. He invites it out into infinities of time, not by any abstract explanation of eternity, but by bearing its life out upon His own consciousness of eternity, until, prophet that He is, it has its own consciousness, in which self-sacrifice and the immortal life are inevitable. In Christ, its dumb prophecies are fulfilled; the soul finds use for its breadth of wing. And this use is the beginning of the Christian experience, and that gives significance to this opening hour of its life in Christ. To use His own figure of the vine, so prophetic is the vine on which the branch now finds itself, that it thrills with the new life, and the im-

pulse of its vital energy is "*the power of an endless life.*" No longer does it wither with lack of vitality, for it has surging through it the life of God, and that, being the motive power of the universe, allies it with the concerns, not of a spot of earth, but of infinity. An alliance is formed in Christ with the order of the universe, and the future is secure. As the Christian life goes on, it is the more prophetic. Christ unfolds the depths of His own nature in the unfolding of the spiritual consciousness, and every new break of the old life is a bud, which is to be a blossom, which is to fall away only for fruit having in itself many seeds. As times and seasons change and pass, it grows to be a still "more sure word of prophecy." The higher the reality, the loftier the summons in Christ's inspiration and command to a still more holy life which shall be a matrix for the future. "*Perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect:*" — as long as such an intimation comes from Christ to the soul

there will lie before it a land in which prophecy and fact are one. In the glory of the transfiguration, a prophet was seen, whose glory naturally changes the soul "*from glory unto glory.*"

Paul saw the prophetic force of His salvation when he said, "*But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory unto glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.*"[1] Peter said the voice came from "the *excellent* glory." New heavens were unfolded. Who shall say where His "*Follow Me*" shall cease to sound upon man's listening soul? "*Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward*"[2] that an infinite prophecy abides. In reverence, the soul sees Christ confer what seem His peculiar powers upon its advancing life. These words become the new points of vision for men. From them, the holy of all ages have noted how above all our con-

[1] 2 Corinthians iii. 18.

[2] 2 Corinthians iii. 4.

ceptions dwells the Incarnate God, and yet how more familiar than our hope is His ever-enlarging humanity. When Jesus offers the treasures of His grace, the heart often has the experience of that elder Ephraim of whom Hosea heard God say, "*I have written unto him the great things of my law, but they were accounted a strange thing.*"[1] Never more than when Christ offers the soul all that it may have does it need the faith of Abraham, who "*staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.*"[2] We are dazzled into doubt oftentimes by the lustre of a crown of which we get visions now and then. "The severe prerogatives of an existence half divine are ours." Yet calmly does Jesus go on, fulfilling, yet prophetic, to open the new treasures in Himself, until at last He comes to that high priestly supplication, a petition and a prophecy, inclusive of the sad lyric notes of a broken heart and the epic strains of an assured triumph, and

[1] Hosea viii. 2. [2] Romans iii. 20.

prays, "*The glory which Thou gavest unto Me I have given unto them, that they may be one, even as We are one, I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one.*" [1] As His own stature rose in that solemn air and assumed its heavenly proportions, so truly was He the prophet of man that man seemed to rise with Him. The testimony of all other powers is confined to the realm of fact, but the "*testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*" [2]

This fulfilling Fact, whose face shone, and who then began anew the career of an eternal prophet, was all these, because He was the Saviour of the human soul from its sins. The presence of Elias, departing only after he had conversed with Him concerning the "*decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem*," was in harmony with the relations of the death of Christ to the feelings of the soul, as expressed in all prophecy; to the need, and therefore to the sacrificial gift out of God's love; to the

[1] John xvii. 22. [2] Revelation xix. 10.

salvation which should save men; to the obedience and love of a law whose righteousness was emphasized in the work of redemption. To complete this work of redemption, this new prophet of humanity, to whom the past surrendered, as its great figures disappeared, was to found a race of prophets whose lives should be lived by the law of His life, — self-sacrifice, — and the secret of whose whole power and hope lay in the cross. So Elias talked of His decease. The old minstrel sounded on that harp, whose string then received his last touch, the key-note of the future. The prophets of humanity still see furthest, when from Hermon they look by way of Calvary.

— "All through life I see a cross,
Where sons of God yield up their breath;
There is no gain except by loss;
There is no life except in death,
Nor glory but in bearing shame,
Nor justice but in taking blame;
And that eternal Passion saith,
'Be emptied of glory, and right, and name!'"[1]

[1] *Olrig Grange.*

LECTURE VII.

Jesus Only.

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Jesus Only.

"And Peter said, Master, it is good for us to be here; let us build three tabernacles; one for Thee, one for Moses, one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud: saying, This is my beloved Son, hear Him. And when the voice was past, they saw no man save Jesus only."—MATTHEW xvii. 4; MARK ix. 8, 9; LUKE ix. 30–36.

THE transfiguration of Christ furnishes an illustration of how men are continually prone to found the greater upon the less, and to rest the partially understood present upon the evident past. As we have already seen, the coming of Christ unto men so restores the integrity of the soul that the intellect recovers its native logic; and that fact is nowhere more clearly shown than in this: that when the Christ has His full influence upon the soul the mind is con-

verted, the order of thought is reversed, and the past is understood in the fact of the present and in the promise of the future. "We walk by faith, not by sight." It is evident that Peter had not yet taken the Christ fully into the currents of his life. His Lord shows this, when He puts them off, and asks them not to speak of this scene until the resurrection from the dead, when, in them, there should be a risen Christ which should justify and make clear the Saviour whom they had so unintelligently followed. Then, He seems to say, full faith in the transfiguration will come. Peter furnishes, in himself, the portrait of a piety which has not been "buried in His death" nor yet has "risen with Christ." His proposition to build three tabernacles indicates the desire he had that his Christ, as well as himself, should have the visible association of these monarchs of the past. These words show that Peter, at least, thought that he understood Jesus. In the unexpressed panic of their

souls, they caught upon Moses and Elias, these great figures vouchsafed from the unseen, as means of estimating the Christ, instead of clinging to Him as the one Fact which then and there flooded the whole past with such a radiance that all its steps must seem a divine path. Peter saw such a triumph in that hour, for his Christ, that he would have been glad to have those who made it stay and continue it. But that would have been to found a commonwealth of three citizens, Christ, Moses, and Elias, to the impossibility of whose existence that cloud, be it "shekinah of radiance" or barrier of darker folds, with its voice gave its testimony. That cloud rolls yet before the eyes of any mind which has done such wrong to its powers of discovery and their Lord as to find no infinite difference between the leader and lawgiver of Israel and the Saviour of men. It comes yet from any Hermon-height of our culture, drifting from the snow which makes it, and lingering like a phantom, until it

speaks with a revelation to that soul whose spiritual life knows no difference between the touch of an infinite Christ and the influence of the mighty spirits who cleared the way for Him.

The spiritual life of our time confesses its character in a literature which builds tabernacles to a lofty legalism and a wandering hope. It is the hour of Christ's transfiguration. Let us not continue the error of mistaking it for the hour of His resurrection. Literature, the record of the soul's life, is a snow-crowned Hermon. On this height the face of Jesus shines. From the romance-criticism of Renan to the elegant paganism of Arnold, we hear the unwilling confessions of the glory in Jesus of Nazareth. When Emerson is asked why he does not include Jesus among his "representative men," he confesses the glistening garment which He wears by saying, "It takes too much strength of constitution to do that."[1] The

[1] Bartol, *Principles and Portraits*, p. 221.

Occident is told by the Orient that He is theirs,[1] and confessions from the East aver that the Hermon on which He stands is loftier than their Himalayas. The poetry of our day is the lyric of His sad life, and the epic of His career will be gathered, here a line and there another, from strains which use all the rhythms of the soul. Science confirms His theories of life; and the infinity in which He lived seems surer to philosophy than all else. The student of history and of man beholds the transfiguration of the Nazarene, and has a "*Novum organum.*" A Napoleon confesses, "*I know men, and tell you that Jesus is not a man. Comparison is impossible between Him and any other being in the world. He is truly a being by Himself.*"

Thus, in the darkness, does the face of Christ shine. Many a Peter, seeing how the law of human life seems to give its recommendation to the Christ, and noting how the hopes of man gladly recognize

[1] Mozoomdar, *The Oriental Christ*, p. 116.

Him as at least a hopeful sign for mankind, proposes to ground the religious life here, and in various ways informs the race that, at last, Christianity is safe! "*Let us build three tabernacles.*" Let us pause, rather, and notice that Christ is not visible in the light of their transfiguration, but that Moses and Elias are visible in the glory of the Christ. Our modern Christianity flaunts its weakness in its ready acceptance of patronage. We are so superficial in our Christian life that we bless literature and science for coming where they certainly must come, or be unseen of mankind. Christ, the transfigured, is the transfigurer of these. Take Him from history, and on what mountain top could our modern lawgivers and prophets gather? This is lost sight of, as Peter's proposition comes again to the lips of our anticipatory and apologetic religiousness. And there is no escaping the saddest phase of the fact, namely, that from a band of disciples, as aforetime, from whom the cause of the

Christ has special reason to expect the truest faith, there do come, in these moments of confessed transfiguration, overtures of defence through ardent apology and schemes of personal service through fancied piety which would identify with forces outworn the pervasive, conquering Saviour. We seem delighted to find some great soul that will make Christ a little less incredible to us, through a complimentary line, or Christianity a little more easy to our native paganism, by a pleasing paragraph of praise. Instead of going through history with a Fact, the surest we have, to explain the otherwise meaningless lives of men, to relate the fragments of a divided humanity into unity, to lift up the half-hearted philosophies of a passing day and join them to such truth as shall fulfill them, we seek to defend our holy Christianity by patronizingly showing its likeness to some far-off humanism, and essay to relieve our faith from embarrassment by quoting, alongside the sayings of Christ,

some merely verbal similarity from lips which confess the panic of the soul, and are soiled with sin. Peter carried the passion for comparativism into realms where there is but One. More just was he to history than we, who seek a new apologetic as we gather the words of the stories to find a classical element in early Christianity, or compare Socrates or Marcus Aurelius with the King of Kings.

A cloud rolls between. Under it our superficial faith must learn of its ignorance of history and of its misapprehension of religion. With the coming of that cloud, it learns that Christ is the light in which these are seen; for when He is lost to sight, so also are lawgiver and prophet. The elegant paganism or the lofty Judaism of any age, ancient or modern, is appreciated alone in the light of Christianity. Meaningless indeed were Plato and Seneca to the conduct of Greece and Rome; and "conduct is three fourths of life."[1] They

[1] Mathew Arnold.

would mean less to us, had not Christianity rescued them. Take the loftiest pre-Christian writer and put the Christ out of sight, and lo, the more tenderly he speaks the more he seems to scorn the hopelessness of the human heart. Plato's beautiful words, "May I, being of a sound mind, do unto others what I would that they should do unto me," would indicate only the disproportion of dream and fact in the world, were there not One who had realized the ideal. The modern words concerning immortality put into the speech of Cato, "It must be so," would, like many real utterances, make the universe false, if One, who spake with authority, had not said, "*If it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you.*"[1] Only when, in peerless glory, we see the Christ transfigured on heights of human thought, or on the facts of modern progress, does every prophet's whisper concerning Him become audible. Then

[1] John xiv. 2.

we know what the mind of Plato was aiming at when he said, "We will wait for one, be it god or god-inspired man, to teach us our religious duties, and, as Athene in Homer says to Diomed, to take away the darkness from our eyes;" or when he said, "We must lay hold of the best human opinion, in order that, borne on it as on a raft, we may sail o'er the dangerous sea of life, unless we can find a stronger boat, or some word of God, which will more surely carry us." But the moment we confuse the relations of Plato and the Christ, and seek to make them equal, they both disappear in the cloud. There is no Saviour, then, and Plato means nothing. The soul is living over again, in our age, its pre-Christian era; modern literature is full of a lofty legalism and eloquent with the prophecy of a Christ. God doth not leave Himself without a witness. The missionary of the nineteenth century has only to say in certain circles, "*As certain of your own poets have said,*" to repeat Paul's ex-

perience with classicalism. Our Moses is a Stoic; Elijah to-day is Hellenic rather than Hebraic; and in these hours of apologetic Christian life, there is no greater danger to the Church than that her Peters will so persist in building like tabernacles to literary prophecy, scientific legalism, and historic reality, that she and the world shall lose the unconscious message of Huxley and Arnold, with the Christ, in nineteen centuries of whose light they may be seen. The cloud has already come over us; we feared as we "*entered*" it; but that cloud is lifting, and as the Voice speaks, "*This is my beloved Son, hear Him*," there comes to sight "*no man save Jesus only.*"

This has been the error of one wing of a Christian life, which must ever be apologetic or nothing. The error of the other wing, safe as it supposes itself to be in theories of inspiration, is quite as remarkable. As the cloud has gathered over heads which were indubitably orthodox,

and as, in spite of all protests, we have entered it, there has been a large proclamation of "fear." The whole body of theology has seemed to be going, and the consternation has been pathetic. But the cloud has been a "*bright*" one, though it "*overshadowed*" us; and now we see that we had too nearly identified facts of the most vital difference in quality and import, and had thus brought upon our powers of spiritual apprehension a vagueness of perception and an obtuseness of appreciation which did not render less dense the cloud which produced our distrust, whose largest element was "fear." This has been the history of much of the world's skepticism. History is simply repeating itself along this line, in our querulous and startled time. The era of theological thought preceding our own had too nearly identified Judaism, legal and prophetic, with Christianity. A far too Mosaic conception of God had passed as a necessity to any correct creed. A spirit of ec-

clesiasticism and an attitude toward those who differed from the traditional thought, quite like that of Elijah after the sacrifice on Carmel, had possessed the church. A conception of the perfect sacredness of some history and of the total unsacredness of other chapters of history, called "profane," which conception was essentially Jewish, was made to survive or perish alongside the burning words of St. Paul at Athens, or the words of Christ on the Mount. Where this was questioned, men were informed, theology was to stop. "Let us build three tabernacles: it is good for us to be here," said many a Peter, "*not knowing what he said.*" He has had time recently, under the cloud, to find out just what he said. Dogmatism is now much more nearly proportioned to intelligence. Under the blur which he has made of the character and authority of Christ, in the attempt to identify Him with Moses in doctrine or in power, we have known what it is to be "*afraid*" of

the loss of truth. But, as of old, it has been a "*bright cloud.*" For a time it seemed to some faithless ones as though criticism would leave the top of Hermon, not only without a Moses and Elias, but also without a Christ. All were hid for a moment. But a Voice is now speaking out of the cloud ; and whenever the church fully hears the message, "*This is My beloved Son, hear Him,*" and proclaims Jesus only, the last vapor of our skepticism will lift and pass away, and "*Jesus*" will be "*found alone.*" The inspiration and significance of the Old Testament are found in the New.

Of far more consequence is the error in our religious life which carries such desolation. We are pouring the "*new wine*" into "*old bottles ;*" and the new wine is being lost. A legal and constrained Christian life and an anticipatory gospel upon our lips and in our hearts are proof enough of how Peter has perpetuated unto our day his desire to build three tabernacles. A brief study of our Mosaism, of

motive and life, will indicate the supreme value of the cloud whose overshadowing is so significant.

Every human being is conscious, in proportion to his thoughtfulness, of the presence of law with which he has to do. Our day has a thousand voices proclaiming its omnipresent reign, and a thousand other voices declaring the worth of liberty. It would seem just the hour in the history of ethics when the law of liberty might become the law of man's life. But intellectual perceptions are ever apt to be one-sided; and our era of intellectualism, in the church and out of it, has seen, at a single moment, but one side of this "law of liberty." It has thus strengthened the hold of the conscience upon *law* at one time, and the hold of the will upon *liberty* at another. Thus, the mind has been divided against itself, and the whole truth has been lost. Where this teaching has been the strongest in speech, there has been nothing real offered to the

mind which would unite these two seemingly diverse powers, law and liberty. The church has been far too forgetful that one Fact alone, personal and authoritative, could unite them. Forms and ceremonies, ecclesiasticism and doctrines, have been so substituted for Him that, in the church, men have grasped "*law*," and out of it they have adored "*liberty*." "*Law*" alone has degenerated into *legalism*; "*liberty*" alone has gone into *libertinism*. Thoughtful, inquiring natures behold, too frequently, a formal, Mosaic spiritual life in the church, and a careless, licentious paganism outside. Our church-life is the confession that we have been building a tabernacle unto Moses, because we have not lovingly seen the peerlessness of Christ.

Jesus only is the watchword of evangelical reform. Moses is sublime, but only because Christ fulfills him. We shall be judged by a law, but, as James suggests, it shall be "*the perfect law of liberty*."

Under these words there will be a growing appreciation of the power of real Christianity. We behold its influence now, as it is fenced in by formalism and shut up by constraint. At the fastened gate, Jesus is standing, and the words which He speaks are solemn enough to us who are living in the careful mechanism of law: "*Except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.*"[1] Such an announcement falls with great force upon us. For we have been so careful and painstaking and proper in all our mechanical piety. "Is all that to go for nothing?" Like the young man, we are telling our Master how very faithful we have been to the commandments since we became members of the church; but when He asks for personal and total surrender to Him, our piety goes away "sorrowful." Nothing seems so strange to a modern Old Testament saint as the treatment which

[1] Matthew v. 20.

the New Testament gives to all his laborious concerns about the proprieties of piety. He never considers what a thorough drudge he has made of himself, and how slavish has become his religious life. He has nothing but "law;" and lo! he is hanging to that, not because he loves it, but because he fears to let go. Under what a "cloud" he stands, even at the transfiguration of Christ! But it is a "bright" cloud. Heaven is glorious on the other side, and when the Voice speaks to that soul and tells him, "*This is my beloved Son*," using the very words of the baptism-scene, and adds, "*hear Him*," the cloud lifts away, and he sees "*no man save Jesus only*." We lose even Christ, when He is no more than Moses to us. Moses must be left behind, because Christ has achieved freedom from the burden and love of evil; and in that freedom the law is more sacred than ever, and the soul is "*a son, not of the bond woman, but of the free*." "Tutors and governors" have

finished their work. "*The fulness of the time*" is come, and God hath "*sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*" [1] "*Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage.*" [2]

Let us not say that the life by law is valueless. Every man's Mosaism is a preparation for the Christ. A moral man is not a pagan; as the Old Testament was divine, and not human, after the manner of the Phædo or the mythology of the Hindus. But over all human life stands at this hour the personal Christ. Obedience learned in Moses is not to be forgotten in Christ. Into a modern Mosaism, however, which is full of "*Thou shalt not*," He introduces, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the*

[1] Galatians iv. 5. [2] Galatians v. 1.

first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." [1] Here then we see, again, that the law of liberty and the law of love are one. This law of love runs up to God, who is Love, and it gets its power there; and then, when the knees are trembling and the soul is weary, and God seems too far off, when the soul cannot grasp the Infinite, Jesus Himself offers Himself, not as a moralist, but as "*the Son*," who makes "*free indeed*," as at once the motive and personal object of the soul's devotion, inclusive of law, because He is God of very God; that is, the love of Love to us, — Himself, as the life of our living. "*This man must be counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who founded the family hath more honor than the family. For Moses was intrusted with jurisdiction simply as an upper servant of*

[1] Matthew xxii. 38.

the household, but Christ as the Son who is the head of the household." [1]

When, thus, our Christianity is more full of Christ, it will be powerful in all lines of real reform. So long as a Mosaism of life abides, Christian statesmanship can hardly be expected to see that not so much in laws made to restrain crime, but in building up from within a manhood which will freely move toward righteousness, lies the work of legislatures and societies. So long as the church forgets that "the Kingdom of God is within," or nowhere, she will be wasting efforts in the attempt to push in upon a man a temperance or a virtue only from the outside. There is no such real foe to the demon of intemperance as a loved and personal Saviour. So long as a Christian nation has not been blessed, in the religious life which it has, by a morality deeper than that of Moses, our marriage and divorce legislation may be expected to occupy its present position; but

[1] Hebrews iii. 2, 6.

when out of the cloud God speaks, and we see "*no man save Jesus only*," the infamy of our sin will be realized and some of its pollution purged away. Thus the destinies of society and of the nation lie in the hands of Christians; and our own salvation waits for the experience in the soul of a personal Christ.

The evils coming and the good detained by an anticipatory gospel of life are quite as considerable. Our age is wondrously prophetic. Elias has tabernacles with the Christ; and such a cloud has hidden both, as it ever must be, that the human mind is bewildered. "Bright" as it is with promise that a better hour draweth near, it yet "over-shadows" the church's work, the world's progress and reform. We are waiting for a new statement of doctrine, a new method of church government, a new apologetics which shall silence skepticism, and an untried reason of some sort which shall make us all we ought to be. In our proposition to build to Elias, Christ and Elias

both have left the scene. It is everywhere repeated. A soul, a church, or an age, which waits expectantly for fresh light in the presence of sufficient light for the doing of duty, loses even its reason and hope for any more illumination. Nothing so threatens modern Christianity with disaster as the disposition to confuse the claims of the real Christ and the unspoken prophetism which stands waiting. There is a moral film which gathers over the spiritual eye, when it looks unappreciatively into the face of the shining Christ, — a film which hides Him at last from the eye. Nothing but the Voice from the cloud and the vision of "*no man save Jesus only*," received in hearty faith and in total forgetfulness of the great souls which crowd to His transfiguration, can deliver us from that spiritual stupor in which we stand, beclouded and afraid.

I know of nothing which, as a doctrine of life, more truly illustrates the passion of our century for prophecy, and its forget-

fulness of facts, and, at the same time, shows how really every modern Elias has been fulfilled ages ago in Christ, than the present influence and certain future of Positivism. Comte is our chief modern Elias, to whom tabernacles are builded in England, France, and America. Dense indeed have been the clouds which have rolled over the modern mind, in the progress of the building. As they roll away, we see how gross was the blindness of a gospel which has, in itself, principles which make Jesus of Nazareth the most vital soul of all history, and which, nevertheless, at the very hour of His transfiguration in recent thinking, makes a conception of Humanity which leaves Him out. No being of earth has ever so stood for his race as did this Galilean. No man among men has so felt their cares and carried their sorrows as has this Man of Calvary. Nay, not the whole race, outside of His soul, has so consciously and intelligently borne its own problem, to say nothing of finding

its solution, as did this Nazarene. The Humanity of Comte, as well as that of Isaiah, is a dream without Him. He makes this fiction a reality only at Calvary, for at that spot His own life bore its consummate fruit. No man so bowed to the service of Humanity as the Christ who both lived and died for it, yet, being no Comtean, He did not worship it. The gospel of Comte is self-worship; for Humanity is made up of individuals, and if each worships Humanity, he is worshipping either what includes him, or a set of persons who worship him, since, at its best, it is a cult wherein each man worships the rest. It is a scheme to lift the race by the strength of its own arms, and to leave out of the effort Him who, according to its very principles, has the most power.

Max Müller tells us that the concept of *Humanity* is the gift of Christ. Only as nearly nineteen centuries transfigure Him can this modern Elias be seen. As the bewildered thought of our time comes to a

calm, and the supremacy of Jesus is confessed, we see that Christ alone as a perpetual Fact furnishes the only Positivism. The blind man was a Positivist of a real sort when he said: "*One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see.*" The Positive philosophy of the soul comes when this prophet and lawgiver of Humanity becomes its Lord and Saviour. The Son of God alone is the Son of Man. The "Theological Stage" is never passed in a true Positivism. The Divine Christ is history and prophecy; and is the centre of a Religion of Humanity. No dream of Comte has ever outrun the *fact* in Christ Jesus. And by those facts He stands to continue His prophecy for Humanity, saying: "*Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto the Father.*"

Thus, the more truly we see the transfiguration of Jesus in our day, the more surely are we left in the presence of His absolute lordship. Our Judaism, like that of the disciples, comes down from the height

of Hermon, saying: "*Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come?*" We repeat their experience: "*And He said, Elijah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things: but I say unto you that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but they did unto him whatever they listed. Even so must the Son of Man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that He spake unto them of John the Baptist.*"[1]

The real prophets of the Christ are too full of Him to escape His fate. The Jew yet waits for Elijah. To-day, he has a seat prepared for him at the circumcision of his child; at a certain moment in the passover, the door is opened by the youngest child, that Elijah may come in; and, in the era of the Talmud, the goods without owners were put by until Elijah should come. Our Judaic Christianity waits with quite as much ceremony for its new light, and our anticipatory literary spirit is quite as unappreciative of any John the Baptist.

[1] Matthew xvii. 12.

The days of prophecy are closed so far as prophecy means only the foretelling of a coming Lord and Saviour. John the Baptist had come, and the mistake of men had been that they had weighed him in scales fit only for the elder Elias. This son of Elizabeth and Zacharias had a sense of present reality that made the dream of his soul contemporaneous with its realization in Jesus Christ. Truly, he was "*more than a prophet.*" No "*reed shaken by the wind,*" no "*man clothed in soft garments,*" was he, but a child of the past uttering the accents of present and future. This man had seen the glow of transfiguration in the face of the young Man whom the crowd did not know; and that hour marks forever the unique spot where the old and the new met face to face. "*He must increase, but I must decrease,*" was the voice of the past speaking of "*Jesus only.*" "*Greater than he,*" said the Christ, "*is the least in the kingdom of heaven,*" [1] — words which tes-

[1] Matthew xi. 1.

tify how, in Christ, the believer begins where the prophet ends his life.

Real Christianity is single-eyed, and wants no other vision than that of the Person it adores. "Saved by hope,"—yet that hope is surrounded by an all-embracing fact. Our advance comes by going the more profoundly into the Reality of which our hope is born. Infinity alone bounds that advance. "*For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,*"[1] yet "*we shall be satisfied*" only "*when we awake in His likeness.*"[2]

So full was He of this prophecy in Himself and for them, that the disciples kept the memory of Moses and Elias, speaking to Him about the "*exodus* which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." As they went back to heaven, He found the glory of His transfiguration running through the tomb. They could speak to Him about death only as the "*exodus;*" though the words of these heavenly visitants seem to

[1] Hebrews x. 14. [2] Psalms xxii. 15.

involve the glory which was to follow. They, however, must be silent about the secrets whose key He carried. But He could prepare His disciples to utter the magic word, "*He is risen from the dead*," — a word which even they could not have then understood, the connection of which with the transfiguration we shall study in the next lecture.

LECTURE VIII.

The Transfiguration and the Resurrection.

"Whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinity, and only there!
With hope it is, hope that can never die,
Effort and expectation and desire,
And something evermore about to be."

WORDSWORTH.

LECTURE VIII.

The Transfiguration and the Resurrection.

"And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

"And they kept that saying among themselves, questioning one with another, what the raising from the dead should mean." — MARK ix. 9, 10.

THE transfiguration, as we have studied it, was a brief, partial, but significant manifestation of the hidden power and reserved glory in the Christ. It was an hour when the veil was withdrawn from before the Throne, and a glimpse was vouchsafed of "*Him that sitteth thereon*," "*on whose vesture and thigh a name is written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*"[1] A single look, across nineteen centuries, upon that shining face makes the mind confess the inevitable-

[1] Revelation xix. 26.

ness of the event. The time had come when the Being who had bowed Himself in humiliation, in obedience to laws which traverse the lower realm of human life, must lift Himself, if only for an hour, to His natural place, and assume His normal attitude in the universe; and, having thus come face to face again with the laws which traverse an upper zone, be smitten with the ancient "*glory*" which He "*had with the Father before the world was.*" [1]

We have noticed how, in the very splendor of this glory, Moses and Elias, free from the restraints of space and time, yet so visible that the disciples recognized their presence, conversed with the glorified One about "*the exodus which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.*" We must agree that though Christ spoke most probably in Aramaic, that word ἔξοδον, which must have been an equivalent, means more than *death*, although *death* be the incidental fact in the *exodus* of Christ from this

[1] John i. 14.

world. If we turn to Christ's own view of His death, it becomes clear that such a word as *exodus*, rather than the word *death*, is in harmony with His thought. Looking out of the deepest gloom, He says, "*And now, O Father, glorify thou me.*"[1] Moses and Elias, "clothed upon" with spiritual bodies, were speaking in harmony with His idea of His death and its issues, and in harmony, as it is seen, with the facts to come, when they spoke of the "*exodus*,"— a word which may be said to include much that was immediately beyond the decease of Christ. So, while Moses and Elias were speaking, there was an intimation of a glory whose existence was bound up with His leaving this life; and this future glory seems to have been suggested by, or at least related to, the glory of that transfigured face. The step then taken seemed to involve the necessity of another in the same process. Indeed, Christ clearly recognizes the fact that the disciples need to

[1] Milligan, *The Resurrection of our Lord*, p. 262.

have this scene connected in their minds with something which may make it plain. They had heard the conversation about the "*exodus*" which He was to "*accomplish at Jerusalem.*" But that *exodus* meant only the *death* of their Lord to them, as yet. Christ saw their confusion in the words of Peter. Ever conscious, as He was, of how an unrelated truth, or an isolated fact, however luminous, deranges rather than continues the mind's steady advance, He bids silence until the greater truth and fact, to which this is related, shall come to their growing culture. In doing this, He showed that that glory beyond, of which this was such a strong intimation that Moses and Elias in its light talked about His *exodus*[1] rather than His *death* alone, was the same glory of that coming morning when it should be said at the grave where He was buried: "*He is not here; He is risen.*" "*He charged them*

[1] Dr. Westcott on John xii. 32. "The *lifting up* includes death and the victory over death."

that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should be risen from the dead."

Jesus did not attempt to put the transfiguration out of their thoughts, by telling them to forget it. He might have felt sure that these three chosen ones, who were the recipients of the special culture of that particular friendship, would not lose their hold on a continuous thread of teaching by this mighty event. Yet He knew that others would; and He must have thought also how even these three, by saying nothing about it to others, would attach no isolated or wondering significance unto it, and might yet, in secret, experience its influence at the very centres of their life. There was an hour beyond in Gethsemane, when they would be alone with Him again; and there were others on Calvary, where they would need to explore the entire past to find any memory of their Lord which would lend a ray of light to their gloomy souls: then, the private memory of the transfiguration might furnish illumination.

Deeper, however, than any immediate purpose of Jesus was the reason of this charge. It lay in the nature of things, as at that moment things had peculiar illustration in the career of Jesus of Nazareth. That wondrous unity of life, to which attention has been called, was disclosing itself again. The life of Jesus was one process of divine self-manifestation. His transfiguration marks one of its stages; His resurrection marks another. The same latent power which made His face shine at Hermon carried His body at a later day through the broken sepulchre and past the Roman guard. In one, Christ's "power" was manifested as "glory;" in the other, His "glory" was manifested as "power." Jesus is "*declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.*"[1] The resurrection was the gleaming fact which shone through His death with such transfiguring glory as to give Moses and Elias,

[1] Romans i. 4.

whose bodies of resurrection were seen in the light of Christ's transfiguration, not *death* as their theme, but the *exodus*, — of whose glory they could see a prophecy in that glowing face. It needs only to look into the crucifixion, as the event where Christ, by His blood, gave His life to the world, to see the relation of the transfiguration to the resurrection of Christ, at the most decisive moment of His career. So clear and so involved with other phases of the gospel[1] is this, that Delitzsch, speaking on the "*blood*" and its symbolism, says: "As far as concerns the presentation of the blood, the *Risen* One has brought before God, His Father, in the vessel of His body, *transfigured* yet identical with what it had been when crucified, His blood *transfigured*, yet identical with what it had been when shed, and this high-priestly self-presentation of the Redeemer is become the eternally effective settlement of our eternal Redemption."[2]

[1] Steinmeyer, *Passion and Resurrection History*, p. 254.

[2] *Hebr. Brief*, p. 393, quoted by Professor Milligan.

In this mention of the resurrection to His disciples, as they came away with Him from the mountain-summit, there is the most satisfying evidence that the transfiguration had done its work of inspiration and assurance upon His sad spirit. He now saw through *death* to victory, so clearly that ever after He would have His disciples think of this recent event in the light of another event yet more glorious. A mightier certainty of being filled with Omnipotence possessed the outcast Galilean. It was a certainty so instructive to Him that He would have His disciples cherish it for their dark hours. In its illumination, there stretched from His weary feet a pathway through the grave of Joseph of Arimathea; and the moment of transfiguration and that of resurrection became unto Him the two points in time where the divine Omnipotence and glory should be remembered to have been irresistible.

There were, thus, in these two events,

a relationship of power and a relationship of glory. In dealing with the transfiguration alone, noting how the nearer we come to the divine the more we see the majesty of law and the orderliness of God, we have found that it does not detract from the proper deity of Jesus to behold, in the event of Hermon, how large and vital a condition His personal holiness was to any such scene. However much His holiness — as a personal harmony with the universe, rising as it does into serviceableness unto moral aims and forces — was the condition of His transfiguration, we must admit that it was a more thoroughly disciplined, mature, and therefore resistless force, when the day of gloom came over the newly occupied tomb of Joseph. Indeed, in a text already quoted, there is contained a direct presentation of the fact that the power of holiness, either by its grasp upon the laws unseen through an aim that included their ministries, or by its being in itself the Love itself whose order they

were, and which gathered them all into the highest and most inclusive law that could be, — the law of life through death, — did prove its necessary supremacy and manifest its natural energy in that open grave. Jesus is "*declared to be the Son of God with power.*" According to what? "*According to the spirit of holiness.*" By what? "*By the resurrection from the dead.*"

It is certain that only the attitude and feeling of holiness, on the part of man, can serve as the condition of sovereignty over nature. Every day the chemist, in his personal alliance with a natural order, sees, inside of that order, the operation of one law issue forth into another, at the touch of a personal force. Nothing but deepest "holiness" toward nature can at all see how "the old order," in a test-tube, "changeth, giving place to new." These changing "orders," one circle breaking into another, seem to break, in our time, into a circle the segments of whose circumference are being seen, — the law of life out of death or by

means of death. As man becomes more God-like, he is touching laws that break into this law. Put into the tomb of Joseph the Holiness by which the worlds which man studies in test-tube and spectroscope were made, the Personal Order of the universe itself, the Logos, the universal dynamic, and what could be more natural than the resurrection, — than that Life should break forth out of death? The Holiness which permitted death shall then have justified its permission, for ever after it is the servant of life; and the resurrection of Jesus comes to be what it is assumed to be in the Bible, the utterance of the most inclusive law of God, the all-embracing and unifying fact of the universe.

On the resurrection of Christ our cosmology must stand; as on Christ Himself, the *Logos*, must stand all anthropology and theology. The resurrection of the Christ of God is that all-inclusive manifestation of the *Logos*, which, in the beginning, moved in chaos toward a cosmos, and which, at last,

through that manifestation, abolishes the primeval discord of Life and Death, thus giving man his (*Cosmos-Logos*) cosmology.

It is thus plain that the church must stand where her Founder placed her, upon an event inclusive of all that concerns man. Our gospel is, because of these facts, "the gospel of the *Resurrection*." Christ is "*the way*, *the truth*, and *the life*;" but the *Life* speaks its largest word when it says: "*I am the Resurrection and the Life*." [1] "*Because I live, ye shall live also*," [2] said He who is the *Resurrection*. "*If Christ be not risen, then is our faith vain and our preaching vain*." [3] It is the fact which girds the universe of the seen with the reality and authority of the unseen. It is the proof of that divine order which is inclusive of our own system; and by that event God pledges "*the restitution of all things*." [4] "*Repent ye*," said Peter, "*that He may send the Christ who hath*

[1] John xi. 25. [2] John xiv. 19.
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 14. [4] Acts iii. 21.

been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things." [1] Into this event, every other in the life of Christ and every event in the life of man must go for their full significance.

The transfiguration of Christ had peculiar characteristics, besides this, which would relate it to the resurrection. Yet they all depend upon the fact that the *Logos* in the transfiguration had just intimated the native mastery which He had, and the supreme relation which He held to the universe, or that Christ had by personal holiness utterly yielded in the resurrection to the power which for an hour glorified Him in the transfiguration. Yet that power was He, — "*I and my Father are one.*" [2] The resurrection completed the transfiguration. What was partially seen by those three on Hermon was seen more fully by Mary and the other women,[3] by

[1] Acts iii. 21.

[2] John x. 30.

[3] Luke xxiv. 10.

Peter,[1] by the disciples on the road to Emmaus,[2] by the ten troubled ones,[3] by the doubting Thomas,[4] by the seven near the sea of Galilee,[5] by "*more than five hundred*" and by James,[6] by the triumph of Ascension,[7] and by a saving appearance to an intolerant foe who journeyed toward Damascus.[8] He had been *transfigured;* He was now *transformed.* Never again was that flesh and blood, sprung from the life of the tribe of Judah, to lose a ray of its fully achieved excellence.

So contemporaneous were the truth and character of Christ in their steps of growth — that is, such a unit was His life — that the transfiguration marked one of the stages of the transformation which became complete at His resurrection. His physical life was up with His spirit to the height of His personal holiness. As He came nearer the cross, and, at last, as we have

[1] Luke xxiv. 10.
[2] Luke xxiv. 13–16.
[3] Luke xxiv. 46.
[4] John xx. 27.
[5] John xxi. 2.
[6] 1 Cor. xv. 6, 7.
[7] Acts i. 9.
[8] Acts ix. 5.

seen, at the crucifixion so identified Himself with the Supreme Holiness, His whole self was so pervaded with the infinite, that, a little later, Jesus was "*declared the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.*"

Never do the apostles, at the decisive moments in their ministry, so speak of the resurrection as to break away from this suggestive characteristic which it has with the earlier event of Hermon. The first in the order of Christ's life seems to be where the nascent power of the Christ manifested itself as glory; the second where the maturer glory of Christ manifested itself as power. At the transfiguration, there stood one beholding the glory and hearing the charge to tell no man of this event until the resurrection. Peter seems to have caught the meaning which Christ had, when, forty days after the crucifixion, he tries to make clear to his hearers what the power was in the day of Pentecost. "He had shed forth this, which we both see and

hear." Something, which was forgotten at the hour of the denial, had given Peter a conception of the Christ as the Omnipotence of history. As he proceeded, he spoke of Him as the One "*whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.*"[1] As His face glowed with the "*glory*" which He had with the Father before the world was, so He rose with the "*power*" that was the Son's when the worlds were created. As on the mountain there was no arbitrary fracture of a lesser law in whose jurisdiction Christ had been walking, but rather there was a natural issuing of the less into the greater, so, at the grave of Joseph, God did not loose the pains of death by breaking the laws of death's ministry and realm, but, because death is the servant of life throughout the universe, God — the Order Himself, because, at last, He is a Law unto Himself — "*loosed the pains of death,*

[1] Rom. vi. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 14.

because it was not possible that He" — the self-conscious *Logos* — "*should be holden of it.*"

The resurrection of Jesus is a fact of the deepest philosophical significance. Philosophy is confessing a "*groaning creation.*" It is evident that a *Logos* has been in things from the beginning. The more we study the Christ, in the light of the deeper thinking of our own day, the more we are ready to confess that in Him is "the nature of things." Things seem tending through all the universe to some such fact as the resurrection. Life by means of Death — Death as the servant of Life — are facts appearing on every side. An occult law is touched by the quivering atom and the brain of man, which promises a goal for creation, — a goal which includes not only the transfiguration of matter, but its transformation as well. It is with a grip almost prophetic that materialism will not let the most spiritual scheme forsake matter. God's truth does not leave

itself without a witness in the most benighted places.[1] The problem of the material world is not solved in man, noble being that he is, save as man's life and being have their Hermon and stand by the open grave of a risen Lord. The *Word* from the beginning, the *Logos* of the universe, comes there to demonstrate that the seen exists for the unseen, that the spiritual will not be submerged in the material, but that matter will be transfigured, and at last transformed, according to the law of resurrection in Christ Jesus. "*The restoration of all things*," mentioned in the speech of Peter, hovers over like a dream which is rapidly being fulfilled in Him who *is* not only the "*Resurrection*," but also "*the first-born of all creation.*"[2] With the "*new heaven*" shall come the "*new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"[3]

The resurrection body of Jesus Christ was His completely transfigured body. It

[1] Büchner, *Kraft und Stoff*, p. 2 (Aufl. 4.)

[2] Col. i. 15. [3] 2 Peter iii. 13.

was no longer the body of His humiliation, but the body of His glory. Looking from the isle of Patmos, John seems not to have forgotten the glorious face of the transfiguration, nor the promise that lay in the request of Jesus to be silent until the resurrection; for, beholding his risen Lord, he says: "*And His countenance was as the Sun shineth in His strength.*"[1] In His ascended life, the transfiguration was entire.

These considerations will help us to understand the communication of power and glory, in transfiguring and resurrection power, to His present "*body*," the church of Christ. We have no reason, with these considerations, to grasp with less earnest hand the faith of ages in the resurrection of the body. And, in these studies, we may be able to see not only the spiritual transfiguration and resurrection, which go on in the soul of the believer, but also we may have some vision of the glory to come, when "*He shall change our humble body*

[1] Revelation x. 1.

that it may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body."[1] The body of Christ's glory is "*the first-fruits*" of a resurrection which believers shall have in Christ. "*Because He lives, we shall live also.*" He that has righteousness has that which begins in, and is vouchsafed unto him through the righteousness of Christ; so also he that shall be raised again at the last day shall be raised by "*the power of His resurrection.*" When Paul writes to the Philippians of the yearning of his soul, he confesses the aspiration "*that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection.*"[2] Christ Himself, who is "*the resurrection,*" "*formed within,*" is "*the hope of glory,*"[3] a glory which first appears on life's mountains in transfiguration of soul and body, and afterwards appears at life's graves in resurrection of soul and body.

Enough has been quoted from the New Testament to show that, first, "*the power of His resurrection*" is the power of His

[1] Phil. iii. 21. [2] Phil. iii. 10. [3] Col. i. 17.

transfiguration; and, secondly, that there is a glimpse of the resurrection body in the transfiguration of Christ. Our body is "*sown a natural body.*"[1] Into our life Christ comes; and it is transfigured with the *glory* of the transfigured One. This process of spiritualization goes on. The body is holy. It becomes the temple of God. Death comes, and we are His still. The body is raised with the *power* of the risen One. From the time we accept Jesus Christ, "*our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory*" — a glory which flashed out at Hermon and was supreme at the tomb, — "*according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.*"[2] That *mighty working* had its genesis in Love divine. It set the incarnation side by side with the creation. As a process, it is the

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 44. [2] Phil. iii. 20.

work of Redemption, — a work whose advancing triumph was signalized in the transfiguration of Christ, whose future was proved secure in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and whose culminating victory is the "*adoption*" for which "*we wait:*" "*to wit, the redemption of the body.*" Then, adds the seer, when the body of man is redeemed, — because it is nature's "microcosm, the summing up of worlds," — "*the creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption*" — that is, the law of death shall yield to the law of life — "*unto the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*" [1]

Our resurrection body will come from the complete transfiguration of our whole life. As the resurrection body of Christ, by a complete transfiguration, was transformed, so by the same process of grace through Him our bodies shall "*be conformed to the body of His glory.*" This process of grace involves the means of Christ's glorification, as the end it seeks

[1] Romans viii. 23.

involves a glory like His own. "*We are always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.*" The willing anticipation of that "dying" led Him to the transfiguration, and the fact led to the resurrection, "*that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal flesh.*"[1] Every true disciple says, "*Becoming conformed unto His death, if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.*"[2] In these words, we have the central truth of our resurrection. It touches the circumference by many radii; and the deeper the study given to them the more truly do the truths of transfiguration and resurrection in Christ become one in doctrine and life.

"*Being made conformable unto His death*" (θάνατος not ἔξοδος), or "*knowing the fellowship of His sufferings,*" carries the duty of "*bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.*" But that very burden, in the soul of Christ, led Him

[1] 2 Cor. iv. 10. [2] Phil. iii. 10.

upon Hermon and transfigured Him, "*that the life also of the Lord Jesus might be manifested*," first in transfiguration, then in resurrection, "*in our mortal flesh.*" This is the predestinated fortune of the saved humanity which is in Christ Jesus. For Paul, writing to the Romans, indicates how the transfiguration and resurrection lie in the track of the humanity which thus follows Him, when he says: "*For whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His son, that He might be the first-born*" "*among many brethren.*" [1] The conformation unto His death precedes the conformation unto His image; that is, the transformation. Paul goes on to explain the process of grace: "*Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them also He called: and whom He called, them also He justified: and whom He justified, them also He glorified.*" But, as we have seen, in the words "*becoming conformed unto His*

[1] Beet on Romans ix. 21.

death, if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead," that conformation has its end only in the glorification, not of transfiguration, but of "*resurrection from the dead.*" The death (θάνατος) becomes glorious departure (ἔξοδος) at the mount of transfiguration, both in Christ's life and our own. For in that hour of glory the body has the pledge of its "*redemption.*" "*Conformed unto His death,*" we are, at last, *conformed unto His image,* and the transfiguration of Hermon issues forth into the transformation of Joseph's sepulchre.[1]

[1] The suggestive note of Professor Milligan may be quoted here, though by no means because we agree entirely with his position: "By διὰ πν. αἰων., Delitzsch says, 'I understand the whole Divine human, but more particularly the Divine inward, being of Christ, that Divine personality which at the Resurrection interpenetrated, and, as it were, absorbed, the σάρξ, so that He now is altogether πνεῦμα.' We," says Professor Milligan, "understand the πνεῦμα spoken of in them to be a short description of that mode of existence upon which our Lord entered after His resurrection. On earth His state could not be so described, 'the Word became flesh'

Thus must our studies, begun on Hermon, end where all human thought and life

(John i. 14). He was then subject to all the weaknesses and limitations of the flesh. The πνεῦμα was no doubt the foundation of His being even then, but in His great act of self-denial and self-sacrifice, He had taken into union with it our flesh. That flesh He had to interpenetrate and to *transfigure* by its power, *completing* the work of His doing so at the Resurrection. He then entered on the full condition of πνεῦμα, in which He had existed before all time, but with this change: that transfigured human nature was now a part of His Being or mode of existence. And thus it is that He affects our redemption from the power of the σάρξ. By that faith, which is communion with Him, we are made partakers of His πνεῦμα, and are thus gradually raised more and more above the limitations and sufferings of our natural condition. The work in us, however, is not completed here. The 'spirit' of Christ has first to take full possession of our spirits, and then, at the resurrection, to effect that work upon our bodies which was effected on Christ's body at His Resurrection. 'But if the spirit of Him that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies, because of His spirit that dwelleth in you' (Romans viii. 12)." *The Resurrection of our Lord*, p. 249.

It is quite noticeable that so incisive a thinker should have used the words which we have italicized, and yet

under Divine grace ever shall joyfully conclude its task, with a Risen Christ and a Redeemed Humanity. It has grown increasingly evident, in these hours which we have spent on Hermon, that the destiny of man and the universe is in the Christ; that it lies yet in the hands which held it at the beginning, — in the "*Logos.*" The Transfiguration of "*the Word made flesh*" was the visible sign that the unity of the universe, finite and infinite, matter and mind, man and God, was secure in Him. But this sign became

failed to find in the transfiguration, with which Jesus connects His resurrection, the most significant explanation of a process which was going on in Christ, as it must be in His follower, and which declared itself there as a process to be understood in its goal, the resurrection of Christ.

The remarkable volume of Professor Westcott, *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, says of the resurrection that "it issues in the ascension, for which it is the preparation and condition," and adds, "It is not the putting off of the body, but the transfiguration of it," without seeming to find in the transfiguration of Jesus any special relationship unto it. Page 157.

demonstration, when the Transfigured became the Transformed, and the Transfigurer of humanity stood forth its Transformer.

All that Christ was is ours. We live in Him and through Him. Our halting faith waits in the valleys of humiliation ; He points a significant finger to the heights of glory, and says, "*Follow me.*" When the flash dazzles us, and the scene bewilders our souls yet half-asleep, we grow faithless; yet we must follow. Our faith in ourselves is astonished, when He says to His Father : "*The glory which Thou hast given unto Me, I have given unto them.*" [1] Life is transfigured. But he who receives the Transfigured and Transfiguring Christ has within him a force that never rests. "*Christ*" is "*formed within, the hope of glory.*" There is something beyond. A process is going on that includes the destinies of soul and body. John, remembering, perhaps, the transfiguration and its

[1] John xvii. 22.

prophecy of the resurrection, understood it, when he said : "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for* [the reason that] *we shall see Him as He is.*" "*And,*" he adds, as though to strengthen the statement, "*every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure.*" [1] Then, His future is ours; and from the Transfiguration we move on to the Resurrection, — two stages of progress, "*from glory unto glory.*" We shall be growing more and more like Him, as we look with half-views and through clouds, until, finally, from this process of transformation, through being "*conformed unto His death,*" we shall emerge "*conformed unto His image,*" having "*attained the resurrection from the dead.*" "*We all with unveiled face, beholding, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory unto glory.*" [2]

[1] John iii. 2, 3. [2] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

So, from Hermon, the soul cries, "*Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*"[1] Moses and Elias, to whom even immortality may have been, only a vague dream,[2] could not speak of the *death* of Christ, as they saw His body quivering with the latent power of His resurrection, and as there they felt the freedom of their own celestial bodies,[3] save as that death issued forth into His resurrection and ascension (θάνατος into ἔξοδος). And a transfigured Christ is not enough for His people. He must be a Risen Saviour. His glory must become power in our souls. What *transfigured* Him to Peter on the mountain *transformed* Him to Peter at the grave of Joseph. After the crucifixion we can determine what Christ really was to Peter only by his despair. He had lost even the Transfigured Christ, as any soul

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 55.

[2] Perowne, *Immortality*, p. 173.

[3] Delitzsch, *Psychology*, pp. 427, 499.

in woe will soon cease to admire a Christ who, to its admiring wonder, only surpasses the laws and prophecies of the human soul. We see it all in our own experiences. Broken-hearted and fearful, Peter's denial seems to him not so far wrong, after all. All have fled from the cross in hopelessness and darkness. Three days elapse, and the once transfigured Christ is transformed. He has risen from the dead. These illiterate fishermen are transformed, also. They are eloquent, now, with the name of Christ. "Three times did Peter deny Him; three times does he confess Him." Stephen comes. The line of Christian martyrs is founded. Soon James, the beholder of the transfiguration, is so transformed into a hero that He leads the company of Christian heroes. It is no longer a gospel of Incarnation, or Transfiguration, but "*the gospel of the Resurrection.*" Peter stands before all Israel, saying: "*The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath glorified His Son*

Jesus." [1] Now the glorification of Hermon is complete. "*Christ*" is "*formed within the hope of glory*."

We must not linger longer in the splendor of this scene. The world calls from the mountain's base. The vision must be left in the memory; the next duty must be taken up. Not to teach us that the world of the ideal and the world of the real are two worlds, but that they are one, and that the glory of God and the good of man are one, is this chapter in the life of Christ given unto us. Raphael is its most successful expositor. In that study, which he could not complete, — the most admired painting in the world, — not only the mountain height appears, radiant with celestial splendor and visited by heavenly spirits, but the base also, where human failure and triumphant evil cry out in a piteous prayer and a maniac's shriek. It is the picture of the Christian life. Not for an instant does Jesus stand bewildered be-

[1] Acts iii. 13.

tween the vision of God and the need of man. He, to whose immortal sight came Moses and Elias, confronts the victorious Satan, and with the same voice which had just spoken with the heavenly visitants of His coming glory does He banish the Evil One from the suffering child. In the joy of that moment, the human soul will ever see how the ideal and real are one; and how in that miracle the transfiguration of Jesus went out into the life of mankind.

> "'Hadst thou stayed I must have fled:'
> This is what the Vision said."[1]

[1] The "Theologian's Tale," in *Tales of a Wayside Inn.* Longfellow.

THE END.

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With never a chance to choose.

I never thought of the lands beyond
The bounds of my own loved land;
For self I lived, and for self I wrought,
For self I struggled and planned.

Till the Lord of Life, and Light, and Love
Spoke loud to my slumb'ring soul—
"O child of my love, bear thou to far lands
The message that makes men whole."

Then He touched my <u>eyes</u>, and behold, I saw
The darkness of heathen lands,
With their myriad idols, and muttering priests,
Their greed, and their cruel demands.

He touched my <u>ears</u>, and I heard the cry
Of souls in sorrow and pain,
Who know not Christ and His saving power,
And whose death can never be "gain".

He touched my <u>lips</u>, and they longed to speak
To those by sin bowed down,
Of Him who to give <u>us</u> eternal life,
Himself wore a thorny crown.

He touched my <u>heart</u> with His pierced Hand,
And I cried: "Oh Lord! send <u>me</u>,
To the souls that sit in the shadow of death
Let me tell them of Life in Thee."